

# THIRD WAY

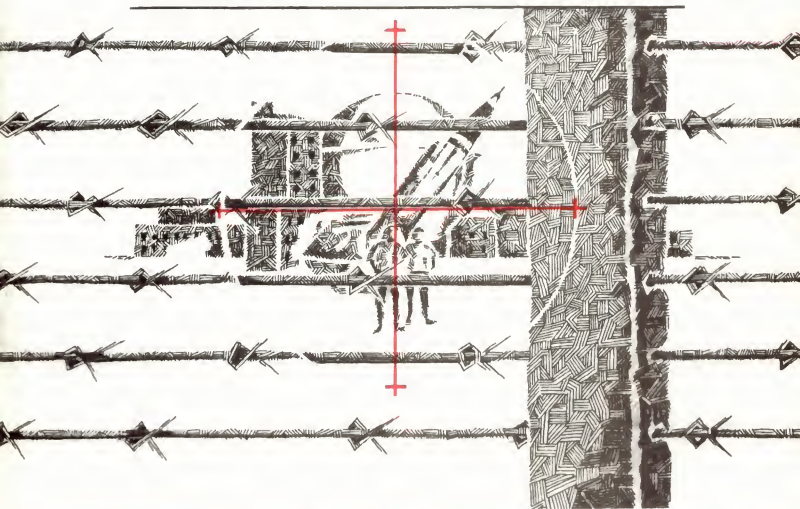
June 1982, 65p

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# To resist evil is costly

After the dramatic events in the South Atlantic in April and May, it is hard to see how we in the United Kingdom can think about foreign policy issues in quite the same way as we have heretofore. So many questions were raised by the Argentine military takeover of the small and remote group of Falkland Islands that it has been hard for even the most experienced follower of world events to comprehend the full implications of what happened and the subsequent reaction by ourselves and others.

For what started as a swift and forceful *coup de main* has escalated into a major drama being played out on several world stages at once. The spectator has his attention focused first on the task force, then on the House of Commons, then on the islands and the unfortunate sheep farmer, then on Washington DC and New York, and then on Buenos Aires. It has left most quite bewildered as TV brought the different scenes and the *dramatis personae* into our sitting-rooms; it became almost like turning on the next episode of a nightly serial.

The sense of unreality for most of us was uncanny. For the Christian, the unfolding events posed some very difficult questions. If he had not up until now really thought too much about the application of biblical principles to the affairs of men, he would have little on which to base his opinions; he would have to rely on those of others. Yet there must be very few of us, if we are known to be Christians, who have not been asked for our views on the moral issues raised by the affair.

On the other hand, readers of this journal will almost certainly have a conceptual framework with which to think about world events and help form their opinions about policy issues both at home and abroad. Indeed, one of the main purposes of the paper is to help us to do just this. The Falklands' episode presents us with a real test to think independently and biblically.

So what can be said about the handling by the leaders of different nations of this tempestuous affair?

Firstly, it is important to establish the common ground. Early in April, Argentina captured by force a group of scarcely defended islands which it had claimed for many years as its own. Their people wished to remain British. The UN Charter and other international law states that if such a dispute cannot be settled between the parties then a mediator should be appointed by them. This would normally be the International Court of Justice at the Hague. The principle is that disagreements should be sorted out by reference to law and not by one side pre-empting the argument by resorting to force.

Secondly, as in the colonial disputes of the 1950s and 1960s, the wishes of the inhabitants must be paramount in any settlement of a territorial dispute, however attractive the land mass is for strategic or economic reasons, or even reasons connected with national pride.

Whether or not the invasion should ever have been allowed to take place is not very relevant. It did, and the aggressor was warned by the British government to withdraw so that talking could continue. Because it was two and a half weeks' sailing time away there was plenty of time for second thoughts and mediation. We prayed for a peaceful solution; we were prepared to listen to sensible solutions with the help of the US Secretary of State who risked considerable unpopularity at home for being 'even handed' with an aggressor. But the reality was that dictatorships do not operate like democracies. Unlike Mrs Thatcher, General Galtieri did not have to 'watch his flanks' or gain the support of a legislative assembly. Reason and common sense did not prevail, and shooting with loss of life started.

At this stage too, the claims and counterclaims of what actually happened began to diverge. It became apparent that truth, too, had become a casualty of the fighting. A democracy requires a free and independent press if it is to operate successfully; a dictatorship to succeed has to control information and in early May it became apparent that the Argentine leaders were fabricating facts which could be verified by independent sources if this had been allowed.

The shooting and the propaganda presented Christians with a very difficult choice and divisions of opinion began to appear.

The moral case for building up pressure on the aggressor was overwhelmingly accepted. Diplomatic efforts coupled with economic sanctions (never very

## THIRD WAY

A biblical perspective on  
today's world

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This One



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effective) and a display of well publicised force (and on South Georgia an indication that it would be used) were applauded. When the junta still refused to listen and indeed started lying unashamedly to the people of Argentina, Christians with any sensitivity were in anguish.

The convinced pacifist was the least in doubt. Armed conflict for him was out and that principle was paramount. His main problem was to propose a credible alternative to achieve justice in this case and not to condone (by lack of action) the aggressor. For others who concede that the use of limited force is justifiable on the basis of the just war arguments — and they represent the majority — their problem is acute, for it has to be based on a lesser of two evils argument, which is not an easy one to deploy.

The evils in this case are the use of force with modern weapons which are abrupt and devastating to life and property on the one hand, and the deep fear and anxiety which would be generated in the weak and small people of this world if yet another aggressor was allowed to get away with his act with only a severe ticking off and being 'sent to Coventry'.

I personally find nothing inconsistent with scripture in first warning and then threatening and finally acting when the powerless are assaulted. It was important that the attitude of the British government was tested before the bar of international opinion. The UN Security Council resolution 502 in the first week of April showed that the case was sound. Indeed, the Second World War, the Korean War and this latest incident are all examples of helping the weak when threatened by the strong.

Peacemaking on the other hand must also be our concern, and no effort or chance must be let slip to make peace. When one party in a dispute does not listen to the other or to the peacemaker then evil has the upper hand. To resist evil is costly; the Christian of all people is in no doubt about this. How far we as individuals are prepared to pay that cost today is perhaps one test of our discipleship.

Simon Webley

## Police questions

Mr Justice Mars-Jones' award of exemplary damages of over £50,000 to the White family of Stoke Newington for false imprisonment, assault and malicious prosecution by the Metropolitan Police raises a number of important questions for the 'post-Scarman' debate.

Firstly, how common is such action by the police in urban areas? Was this simply a case of a handful of aberrant police officers going over the top and behaving in a way quite at variance with standard police practice in such areas? Or is the police behaviour which has surfaced in this case merely the tip of an iceberg of widespread malpractice? The incident follows a pattern of unlawful entry and excessive violence, followed by 'a pre-emptive strike' against those likely to complain, on charges such as assaulting police officers, that would never have arisen had the police not behaved illegally in the first place — a pattern that black people have been complaining has been common for the past two decades. It is not enough therefore for the *Daily Mail* to see this case as evidence that blacks do receive justice in British courts — actually determining what has happened in such late-night incidents in private homes is notoriously difficult. How often have

protests never come to court, or the police version been unquestioningly accepted?

If only a proportion of such allegations are justified, then the evidence suggests that the police's behaviour in the White household was consistent with a far wider pattern of police behaviour. We need to ask how the officers in this case saw their behaviour in relation to the practice of their fellow police-officers, the approval of their seniors, and that of the public as a whole? It is unlikely that such incidents would happen without the police in question regarding themselves as in some way 'licensed' by the operating assumptions prevailing in the police force and the wider society. If this is the case, the severe punishment of the offending police officers, which has been called for by all sections of the press, becomes mere scape-goating, unless serious efforts are made to change the policing environment in which it happened.

A second question is whether Mr Justice Mars-Jones would have awarded such high damages, or spoken so severely and openly against the police ('brutal and inhuman ..... no regard to human dignity ..... monstrously wicked') before the publishing of the Scarman Report. Going beyond the tacit acknowledgment in the repeal of the 'Sus' laws, that they had been misused by the police, Scarman set the firm precedent of a senior establishment figure recognising serious police misdemeanours against the black community.

The third question to ask, therefore is, how much was achieved for the black community by last summer's riots? It seems quite possible that the White family are better off by several thousand pounds, to say nothing of a strong public acknowledgment of the justice of their case, than they would have been before the riots. More widely, the complaints of the black community that were neglected when they were pursued by words, complaints procedures and liaison committees, peaceful demonstrations and the like, are now conceded to have some substance since violence has occurred. *The Sun* would never have called on Sir David McNeel to 'boot out of the force the officers responsible for this sadistic, cowardly and appalling attack' if they didn't see it as a tactical move to forestall further riots by not giving 'ammunition to every black militant in Britain hoping to stir a riot this summer'. Stopping next summer's riots has required some acknowledgment that there were legitimate grievances behind those of last summer. Conversely, of course, the black community will presumably ask — as did black Americans in the 1960s — whether, since last year's riots achieved some concessions, a further round might not achieve yet more.

So it is that, however great the differences between black people in the inner city, and our government and its advisers on the Falkland Islands, they have this much in common: both know that when words and negotiations fail, something can be achieved by bombs. Christians cannot deny that this is how things are; we have to wrestle with the painful, urgent and complex question of how far we accept that fact of life, and how far we contest it and seek another way.

John Root

## Leaving present

It is with great regret that I shall be leaving 'Third Way' at the end of August this year, after a year as editor's assistant and four years as editor. There is great compensation, however, in the reason for my departure, since I and my husband are expecting a baby towards the end of the year. May I draw the attention of readers to the advertisement regarding a new editor on page 6, and ask you to think and pray about this coming vacancy and the right person to fill it.

Alex Mitchell

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# Disarmament — the Palme Commission's proposals

ALEX MITCHELL looks at a just-published document on a crucial world issue.

'If I had only known, I should have become a watchmaker,' regretted Albert Einstein, whose research made possible the atomic bomb.

On the eve of the UN Second Special Session on Disarmament, to be held in New York from 7 June to 9 July, (see box), a great number of people in many different countries wish that he had chosen the watchmaking line as well. The escalation of the arms race and in particular the nuclear arms race, has provoked intense and growing worldwide concern.

In West Germany, NATO's base country, 300,000 people gathered in Bonn towards the end of last year, to protest against more nuclear weapons in their country or elsewhere in Europe. It was the largest demonstration in Europe since the end of World War II.

The normally conservative American Medical Association recently passed an overwhelming vote to inform President Reagan and members of Congress about the medical consequences of nuclear war, with a report stating that 'there is no adequate medical response to a nuclear holocaust.'

European Nuclear Disarmament (END) was founded last year, a network promoting the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone reaching 'from Poland to Portugal'.

In Britain, 120 local councils, including some of the main cities in Britain, have created 'nuclear-free zones' in which the transport, production and placement of nuclear weapons is prohibited.

About 5000 young people flocked to a Church peace forum in Dresden, east Germany, in February (marking the 37th anniversary of the air raid that claimed at least 25,000 lives). Leaders of East Germany's Protestant Church (with an estimated 8 million followers) sharply attacked the authorities for moves against such young people who wear 'swords to ploughshares' emblems that have become the symbol of the fledgling peace movement. Official statements have denounced the emblem as 'a symbol of anti-State views.'

Fifty-four of the 301 Roman Catholic bishops in the United States have joined 'Pax Christi', the international peace movement, and 29 have signed a statement which says that 'even to possess nuclear weapons is wrong'. As pressure on the US government to hold a 'nuclear freeze' referendum in November grows, top Catholics are registering their protests against war spending. One Archbishop is withholding half his income tax to stop it being spent on armaments.

In Britain, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has sprung to life again over the past two years, with a 10-fold increase in membership since 1980. There are now

1000 CND groups in Britain, and the CND disarmament march in London last October drew a quarter of a million people.

And 2000 people went to London in April this year to 'lobby for survival', asking their MPs to press for positive proposals at the UN Special Session on Disarmament. They were asking for 'substantial measures of nuclear disarmament and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones; an immediate reduction in exports of conventional weapons, particularly to repressive governments; the steady conversion of armament industries to socially useful production at home and overseas; government support for peace education; and that the world's poorest people should benefit most from the resources released by reductions in military spending.'

## 'Common Security'

A new and crucial book, *Common Security — a programme for Disarmament* (to be published by Pan Books), timed to coincide with the UN Special Session, deals with some of these and other issues around the subject of disarmament. It is the report of the Palme Commission, an international group of political luminaries which was set up in 1980 on similar lines to the Brandt Commission. Chaired by former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, the Commission has — very unusually — members from not only North, South, and West, but also East, with representation from the USSR, and the members include four ex-prime ministers and five ex-foreign ministers (including Dr David Owen from Britain).

## UN SECOND SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT

At the first UN Special Session on Disarmament, held in 1978, 149 governments produced, by consensus, a final document which was surprisingly comprehensive, with the ultimate objective of 'general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control', as a gradual process to be achieved in accordance with three basic criteria, 'security, balance and verification'.

The second Special Session will take place from 7 June to 9 July 1982 in New York. Representatives of 157 governments will attend, and one of the Session's principal tasks will be to seek agreement by consensus on a Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament, to establish a strategy for negotiations and substantial arms reductions in the years ahead. As a meeting of the UN General Assembly, the recommendations which may be produced will not be mandatory or binding, even on those states which vote for them. Nevertheless, its value could be great, in encouraging governments to agree on the need for substantial measures of disarmament, and in discussing in broad outline the content of future conventions or treaties.

The Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher,

will attend the Special Session in June and will speak on behalf of Britain. The UK Delegation to the UN Committee on Disarmament will represent Britain at the Special Session, supported by arms control and disarmament experts from the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office Minister of State responsible for arms control and disarmament is Mr Douglas Hurd.

On the eve of the Special Session (which is also the eve of President Reagan's coming visit to London), Westminster Abbey in London will be a focus for disarmament prayers with a special evening service at which the Rt Rev George Appleton, former Archbishop in Jerusalem and veteran peace campaigner, will preach and which many of the CND activists who take part in the CND mass rally in Hyde Park that day are expected to attend. Seventeen religious organisations in Britain are backing an international appeal for vigils, fasts, services etc with the theme 'Choose Life', focusing on the Special Session. These include the British Council of Churches, Pax Christi, Christian CND, World Disarmament Campaign Churches Group and Quaker Peace and Service.

The subject of the possibility of global disarmament has given birth to helpful and sometimes radical proposals from this influential group, which set itself the goal of identifying security and disarmament measures that can reverse the escalating global arms race. 'A doctrine of common security must replace the present expedient of mutual deterrence,' says the Commission. 'International peace must rest on a commitment to joint survival rather than a threat of mutual destruction.'

#### No winners

The Commission's report rejects firmly the possibilities of 'winning' a nuclear war. 'Nuclear war would be an un-

precedented catastrophe for humanity and suicide for those who resort to it... nuclear war would result in devastation and suffering of a magnitude which would render meaningless any notion of victory.' Any doctrine that is based on this notion, they say, is a 'dangerous challenge to the prudence and responsibility which must inspire all approaches to international peace and security in the nuclear age.'

They likewise condemn the idea of fighting a 'limited' nuclear war. 'Once the nuclear threshold has been crossed the dynamics of escalation would inexorably propel events towards catastrophe.'

The goal towards which the Commission is looking is stated clearly to be 'general

and complete disarmament', even though we recognise that this ambition cannot be realised for years to come'.

#### Salt II

The Commission sees the Strategic Arms Limitations Talk (SALT) process as indispensable; concluding that the US and the Soviet Union should agree on the appropriate clarifications or adjustments of the SALT II Treaty provisions and that agreement should be reached on major reductions in all types of strategic nuclear systems with particular emphasis on sharp reductions in accurate multiple-warhead missiles, thus reducing the fear of a 'first-strike' — the attempt to disarm the opponent or to forestall a possible attack by a lightning surprise attack.

Sadly, it seems as though President Reagan is moving to end America's observance of the Salt II agreement, in the recent unofficial news of the choice of the 'dense pack' system for the basing of America's new MX missile, requiring new silos which are specifically barred by the treaty. Though the pact, signed in 1979 was never ratified by the Senate, both countries said it would abide by it if the other did.

#### Nuclear-free zone

Pointing out that the major military confrontation between East and West is in Europe, the Commission recommends the establishment of a battlefield nuclear weapon free zone, starting with Central Europe and extending ultimately from the Northern to the Southern flank of the two alliances (Warsaw Pact and NATO). In this zone there would be 'no deployment of nuclear munitions, no munitions sites, no manoeuvres simulating nuclear operations and no preparations for the emplacement of atomic demolition munitions'. They also urge that nuclear arms states abstain from deploying weapons which blur the clear distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons, saying 'there is a danger that certain nuclear weapons such as "mini-nukes" or the neutron bomb may appear more "usable"'.

#### Chemical warfare

The Commission draws attention to the

### WHAT IS THE MILITARY BALANCE?

NATO and the Warsaw Pact each claim that the other is provocatively rearming and it is worth studying the analyses provided by expert independent bodies. Two such bodies which have devoted considerable resources to research in this field are the London *International Institute for Strategic Studies* (IISS) and the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI).

The following extracts are taken from the IISS publication *The Military Balance 1981-82*. Where indicated, figures are also taken from the SIPRI Yearbook of 1981.

(The figures for NATO and the USA are based on open information; only limited information on military matters is released by the USSR and therefore the numbers of Soviet forces are informed estimates.)

#### On the East-West conventional (ie the non-nuclear) balance in Europe

'The numerical balance over the last 20 years has slowly but steadily moved in favour of the East. At the same time the West has largely lost the technological edge which allowed NATO to believe that quality could substitute for numbers.'

*Information from: the Council for Arms Control.*

#### On the balance of nuclear weapons able to strike the Soviet Union and the United States:

'The total number of US deliverable strategic warheads (that is warheads which can hit the Soviet Union) is now about 9,000.' SIPRI quote 7,032 warheads on missiles and 9,000 total for bombers and missiles.

The number of Soviet strategic warheads which can hit the United States 'has risen in the year from 6,000 to over 7,000'.

SIPRI quote 6,848 warheads on missiles and 7,000 as the official US estimate for warheads on Soviet bombers and missiles.

#### On the balance of nuclear weapons limited to use in Europe

In Europe the Warsaw Pact is quoted as having 768, or 1,168 if US Poseidon submarines in European waters are included.

'... even with the inclusion of Poseidon on the western side and the continued exclusion of Soviet strategic systems, the balance is distinctly unfavourable to NATO and becoming more so.'

# THIRD WAY

requires an

# Editor

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possibility of a new arms race in chemical weaponry (if chemical weapons were used in Europe, the ratio of non-combatant to combatant casualties could be as high as 20 to one.) Use in war of both chemical and biological weapons is prohibited by the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Possession of biological weapons, including toxic weapons, is outlawed by the 1975 Biological Weapons Convention. But the actual possession of chemical weapons is not prohibited, and the Commission calls for the urgent introduction of a treaty eliminating these weapons and an international convention which would prohibit any secret development or experimentation in the military applications of molecular

biology.

Other subjects which concern the Commission are: the testing of new weapons, and they urge a comprehensive Test Ban Treaty banning all nuclear tests; the growing military competition in outer space ('the use of satellites... could result in a substantial expansion of the strategic arms race into outer space'), and they recommend that priority be given to negotiations aimed at suspending and prohibiting the testing of anti-satellite weapons before 'irreversible technological "progress" has been made'; that the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes may be diverted, and they recommend the establishment of inter-

national fuel banks, an international plutonium storage scheme and international sites for fuel storage.

They refer as well to conventional arms transfers (the volume of which has more than doubled in the last decade, and has now reached a level approaching 530 thousand million per annum; more than three quarters of all arms transfers now go to the countries of the developing world). The Commission encourages the US and the Soviet Union to resume the conventional arms transfer talks which took place in 1977-80, and says that these should also include France, the UK and other major supplier states.



'Hunter-Killer' nuclear submarine

Photo: Political Ecology Research Group

## ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS

Seven multilateral arms control agreements were concluded between 1959 and 1977. Britain was directly concerned in their negotiation and has adhered to them all. So have the USA and the USSR, and the majority of countries have signed and ratified the most important ones — notably the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. China remains a significant exception — but only took her seat in the UN in 1972 and joined the UN Committee on Disarmament in 1980.

An important regional treaty concluded during this period created a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America. Negotiation was carried out by the countries in the region but the five nuclear powers have all bound themselves to respect the treaty — Britain first in 1969, the Soviet Union most recently in 1979.

The USA and the USSR clearly have

a special responsibility for nuclear arms control. Bilateral negotiations between these countries include the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) which began in 1969 and the negotiations on Intermediate Nuclear Forces which opened on November 30, 1981.

### Main Multilateral Arms Control Treaties

#### 1959 *The Antarctic Treaty*

Provides for peaceful exploration of the Antarctic and bans any military measures there.

#### 1963 *Partial Test Ban Treaty*

Bans nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water but permits underground explosions.

#### 1967 *Outer Space Treaty*

Bans the stationing of weapons of mass destruction in space or on the moon or in orbit around earth, and prohibits

the use of the moon or other celestial bodies for military purposes.

#### 1968 *Non-Proliferation Treaty*

Those signatories which do not possess nuclear weapons promise not to acquire them, while those with nuclear weapons undertake to seek nuclear disarmament through negotiations.

#### 1971 *Seabed Treaty*

Bans the placing of nuclear weapons on the sea bed.

#### 1972 *Biological Weapons Convention*

The 1925 Geneva Protocol had banned the use of chemical and biological weapons, but not their possession. No agreement has yet been reached on the possession of chemical weapons, but this Convention bans the possession of biological weapons.

#### 1977 *Environmental Modification Convention*

Bans the use of techniques to change the weather or other aspects of the environment for hostile purposes.



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### Crucial role for the United Nations

This goal of controlling, diminishing and outlawing the use of weapons can only be achieved in conjunction with the Commission's other goal: a radical proposal for more effective use of the United Nations, 'to pre-empt, contain and defuse crisis situations of military conflict.'

Within the UN the international security function rests with the Security Council, but it has tended to be used as a last resort after conflict has occurred. The Commission believes that the Security Council 'must enhance its capacity to pre-empt conflicts and become a central negotiating forum'. Instead of trying to 'hold the ring' after a conflict has already broken out, it would seek to intervene between potential combatants before armed hostilities began.

The Commission envisages a UN security system of collective peacekeeping procedures that would involve a combination of anticipatory, preventive and enforcement measures. This would be underpinned by a 'concordat' among the permanent members of the Security Council that would enable these efforts to go forward without the threat of the veto. A commitment therefore would be established, in advance, in support of collective security action.

The UN peacekeeping force needs, also, to be strengthened and institutionalised. The Commission suggests a number of points to encourage wider participation in peacekeeping: The incorporation of training in peacekeeping as part of UN members' national basic army training; the training and equipping of troops from Third World countries for a peacekeeping role; regional arrangements to establish multinational peacekeeping forces on a stand-by basis; and the stockpiling of equipment, food, medicines etc. to prevent supply shortages.

In the event of a possible conflict, the Palme Commission suggests that a number of steps should occur. Firstly, the UN General Secretary would arrange a fact-finding mission, to be followed if

required by a military observer under the authority of the Security Council. Lastly, the Security Council would authorise the introduction of a UN peacekeeping force at the request of one of the disputing states. The force would be sent to the zone of conflict and seek to deter any potential aggressor. Reasoning that a country would be deterred from gaining international disapproval, the Commission believes that the peacekeeping force would prevent violations of territory from occurring at all.

We may note that, had such a security system been in existence prior to the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, it is likely the course of events might have



been very different.

The Foreign Office, reacting to indications of Argentine mobilisation, would have been able to call on the Security Council to take up its peacekeeping function. A UN Force could have been sent to the Falklands, intervening before the Argentine Forces had taken control of the islands and obviating the need to send the British Task Force. Having stabilised the situation the UN could then proceed to convene negotiations for a settlement without a shot being fired or loss of life.

### Postscript

An interesting postscript to the report is the urging of the Commission that countries undertake an increased effort in further education about the economic consequences of military spending. This underlines the aim of the Commission itself to stimulate public awareness of the growing threat posed by the arms race.

There are five chapters of the report preceding the conclusions and the recommendations: Common Survival, The Threat of War, the Consequences of War, The Economic and Social Consequences of Military Spending and A Positive Approach to Security. The central theme is the emphasis that peace *cannot* be obtained through military confrontation, but must be sought through a 'tireless process of negotiation, rapprochement and normalisation, with the goal of removing mutual suspicions and fears'. *Common Security*, which will be published in many different languages, may have a significant part to play in the process.

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# David Owen's faith

FRANCIS BRIDGER looks at the relationship between theological and political belief claimed by DAVID OWEN.



Dr David Owen

Of all the questions asked about the character of the Social Democratic Party since its inception just over a year ago, the question of religion has scarcely arisen. The Anglican antecedents of the Tory Party and the debt of the Labour Party to Non-conformity and Christian Socialism are well known. But what of the Social Democrats?

*Rev Dr Francis Bridger is curate of St Paul's Church, Canonbury, London, and is shortly to become lecturer in social theology at St John's College, Nottingham. In November 1981 and December/January 1982 we published the first two articles in this series by Dr Bridger examining how David Steel, leader of the Liberal Party, and Tony Benn of the Labour Party, relate their faith to their political thought and life. (Copies of these issues are available from us at 80p each, inc. p & p.) This is the third article, on Dr David Owen of the Social Democratic Party; and the fourth and final article on the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, will appear next month, in our July/August issue.*

In a lengthy article entitled, 'The SDP's escape from the Christian heritage of Socialism' (*Guardian* March 29), Raphael Samuel argued that the influence of religious belief or tradition on the SDP is negligible. 'One is tempted to suggest,' he concluded, 'that the SDP shows some signs of becoming the first authentically post-Christian party'.

The thrust of his argument is that, lacking a past, the SDP can reflect only the present. Since this is dominated by values which are secular and humanistic, these have become the essential values of Social Democracy. Without the historical links with organised Christianity or the residual thought-forms of Christian Socialism, the SDP must inevitably reflect contemporary culture: 'the SDP conceives of politics in temporal rather than spiritual terms, as a pursuit of the arts of government rather than as a struggle between darkness and light. It cleaves existentially to the present. It is the child of a more secular age, faithfully reflecting its hedonism.'

These constitute provocative charges, especially for those Christians who have

joined the SDP, believing the 'middle way' to be somehow more 'Christian' than what they perceive as the extremes of the major parties. It is therefore important to examine the substance behind the rhetoric. Is Christianity important to the SDP's leaders? Is it reflected in the party's approach? Or is Raphael Samuel correct in viewing Social Democracy as little more than a vehicle for humanism which has little time for religious values?

The problem can be only partially resolved by looking at the Gang of Four. Mrs Williams is a practising Roman Catholic; Messrs Roy Jenkins and William Rodgers fit quite well the humanist image, with their roots in the secular Gaitskillism which Mr Rodgers explicitly endorses in his *Politics of Change* (Secker & Warburg, 1982, pp8-9). But what of Dr David Owen, the Parliamentary leader of the SDP? In an exclusive interview given to *Third Way* and in his book *Face the Future* (OUP, 1981), he reveals some features which must serve to modify Raphael Samuel's contention.

Dr Owen's Christianity owes much to two influences; his grandfather and Mervyn Stockwood. The former was a canon of the Church of Wales, with whom David Owen lived while his father was fighting in the Second World War. The influence of Mervyn Stockwood came later during Owen's Cambridge years, when Stockwood's brand of Christian Socialism made a powerful impact. When the Bishop later produced his book *The Cross and the Sickle* (Sheldon Press, 1978), it was David Owen who wrote the preface.

## The content of his faith

What, however, is the content of Dr Owen's faith? He believes strongly that there is 'a power outside oneself that is God'. But he is reluctant to be more precise, and his language becomes an ambiguous mixture of conventional terminology and reverent agnosticism. Of the power outside oneself, 'the structure of that is not tremendously important ... I find it convenient to believe that God was made man and that Jesus Christ came to earth. That seems to me to be a way of making God become alive to people.' Moreover, 'the great strength of the Christian church ... is that God did become man and that Jesus lived the life of a mortal.'

Subjectively, such a belief is important: 'Certainly I think accepting this power can give one strength which can overcome one's own weaknesses, can humble one. And the mere act of accepting that there is a need for strength, or advice or a yardstick of values that is outside oneself is, I think, a very humbling experience, and a very good one, and a very necessary element in Christianity.'

This, however, leads him to understand Christianity as essentially a private experience: 'I have never found the organised church very easy to be committed to. I think that a strand in me is attached to a Quaker view of religion - it's a personal, private matter... I try to keep my religion to myself as a private matter .... It does matter to me, but in a way the more it matters, the less I want to talk about it.'

What of other major aspects of orthodox Christianity? Again Dr Owen's views are positive in tone but conceptually ambiguous: his view of scripture is, he believes, a high one: 'I think that the Bible is not just a good story; I think it has tremendous truths .... there is no other book that I have ever read which has so much wisdom in it. It is a very remarkable book. That doesn't say that I agree with it all necessarily and believe every aspect of it, or that I believe the Old Testament has to be taken in its literal sense.'

No less problematic is his understanding of redemption. It is central, he affirms, but its primary significance is that it points us to hope and optimism: 'Part of my optimism probably comes from a more hopeful view of human nature; and the hope of the world is that we will do better and that our sins can be absolved and that we can be redeemed.' Exactly how this squares with the doctrines of original sin and the atonement is left unsaid.

Similarly, on the question of life beyond death, David Owen remains positive but agnostic: 'Exactly how, or why or what happens after life - life after death and all that - seems to me to go into the realm of mythology. It just seems to me that to know there is hope after death is, I think, helpful.'

Although it would be possible to perform a thorough theological hatch-job on these ideas, Dr Owen's views are nonetheless a far cry from Samuel's contention that religion is unimportant to SDP leaders. However unsystematic and conceptually uninformed the content of Owen's belief may be, the overwhelming impression remains of a definite core which goes well beyond the categories of secular humanism however much it has suffered distortion by them.

This becomes even more apparent in Dr Owen's view of social ethics. For him it is an absolute necessity that there should be 'a more value-oriented discussion of politics, and while some politicians, particularly those who profess no religious belief, may be wary of such an approach, that reluctance must be challenged.' (*Face the Future* p 6). Thus, for the Christian it is vital to carry Christian values into politics.

Of these, the central one is altruism. According to Dr Owen, 'It is the most important guiding principle.' He sees it, moreover, as derived directly from his faith: 'it's part of my religious view - they are two closely interwoven facets.

If you are enjoined to love your neighbour as yourself, then you are enjoined to be altruistic. It is one of the essential commandments .... the church should be constantly preaching the doctrine of love (in its old sense charity): it is altruism, good neighbourliness, community.'

From this follow two consequences. Firstly, that individual Christians must carry their faith into political life: 'Politics would probably be enriched if there were a good many more Christians in it.' Secondly, that the church has a legitimate role as a pressure group: 'The church should be a thoroughly good influence on quite a lot of things, particularly if they are

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**'I think we should be frank about this. This country is very racist: there are a lot of very deep-seated racist prejudices at every level ... I think we have a tendency never to face up to the degree of racialism that exists.'**

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issues involving moral judgments.'

Dr Owen cites examples of the success of organised Christian action. 'I can remember the pressure group that was launched in 1968-9 on overseas aid and in which the Nonconformist churches took a very prominent part. It had a powerful influence on the Labour government to hold the aid programme.'

Ten years later, the Catholic Institute for International Relations backed the Labour government in its view (eventually accepted by the Tories in 1979) that Robert Mugabe should be involved in the peace negotiations in Zimbabwe. Dr Owen recalls that 'they were one of the very few groups to hold their nerve over the independence of Zimbabwe .... I was very grateful for the fact that some concerned Christians were prepared to take a stand.'

Dr Owen's faith leads him to focus on two other issues of principle: equality and racism. On the former, it is necessary 'to foster altruism which is the human drive behind the aspiration to eradicate inequalities and to strive for a more egalitarian society.' Like David Steel, he is unclear about the precise meaning of equality. On one hand he recognises that 'wages and salaries will reflect different responsibilities and opportunities' (*Face the Future* p 4), but that on the other hand, equality cannot easily be meshed with liberty. In the tension between the two, we

must remember that 'the record of state-controlled societies in overcoming inequality is not such as to make any thinking democrat change his or her predisposition for liberty.' (p7). Nevertheless, 'equality is a noble ideal. We know it will not be achieved, but that of itself does not invalidate an aspiration.' (p4). As with Mr Steel, what we are left with is an emphasis upon the reduction of inequality rather than absolute equality of outcome.

On the question of racism, Owen is adamant that there can be no compromise on the principle that all men are equal: 'I think that racism is an issue which you cannot compromise. I believe that stems from the teachings of the Bible that all men are equal, that you should treat fellow human beings as if they were yourself.' The task of the politician is to frame laws and institutions which reflect this.

Nevertheless, he is candid about the strength of racism in Britain. 'I think we should be frank about this. This country is very racist: there are a lot of very deep-seated racial prejudices at every level .... I think we have a tendency never to face up to the degree of racialism that exists.' As a result it is 'absolutely crucial' for Christians to stand firm.

Many Christians, however, will not welcome Dr Owen's equivocation on the issue of disarmament. Here he insists that the Christian faith remains ambiguous. While conceding that 'there is some evidence for pacifism in Christian teaching', he insists that 'the church is ambivalent about it, and if you look at what Jesus said you will find an ambivalence.' As a result of human sinfulness 'I think that in order to abate and cope with the inherent sin of man, it is actually necessary for people for moral purposes to take up arms, to defend themselves.' Equally, force is justified in defence of third parties.

As for nuclear disarmament, Owen respects those who argue for it, but only if they also advocate a thoroughgoing neutralism: 'I would only be justified in giving up nuclear weapons as a moral gesture if I were to take the logic through and become neutralist - to come out of NATO, to become a non-nuclear weapon state, not relying on the nuclear deterrent of the US and abandoning my alliance commitments. What is not logical is to talk about a moral gesture by Britain which is unilaterally done, retaining membership of NATO, retaining the reliance on the American nuclear umbrella, all under the guise of morality.'

Although opposed to Trident, Dr Owen is not a nuclear disarmar. He is in favour of mutual and balanced reductions on both sides, but does not believe from his experience as Foreign Secretary that any other position is credible given the nature of the Soviet regime. He dismisses the idea that a moral gesture by Britain will influence

the USSR on a moral level as 'nonsense': 'The Soviet Union is not in the business of listening to moral gestures, and you have only to see what's being done to Poland to appreciate that... They will respond to negotiations (but) I think they have rather a contempt for unilateralism to be honest .... Morality is not a very high aspect of communist ideology ....'

### Evaluation

Any assessment of David Owen must be made on two levels. On a personal level, the interviewer is left with a notable impression of moral integrity combined with moral drive. This is perhaps confirmed by his consistent support of the government's handling of the Falklands crisis, although this cost the SDP votes in the elections of May 6.

On the level of belief, Dr Owen's brand of Christianity is open both to criticism and assent. It would be wrong to interpret his views as the product of secular humanism, although they have been affected by it. His affirmation of God as an objective reality and his use of conventional language suggests that he is far from secular. He is, however, humanistic in that he seems to understand religion primarily as a function of human need rather than as directed towards worship of God. This may be unfair, but in Dr Owen's framework, not a God exists to service man rather

than man living to serve God.

Dr Owen would no doubt retort that his views are self-confessedly 'unstructured', and that he does not hold himself up as a religious authority: 'I'm just like anyone else - rather worse than most - and I haven't got as clearly structured views about Christianity as many people.'

Even accepting this, however, there are major weaknesses in his view of Christianity which cannot be left without comment. Firstly, in drawing upon the moral thought-forms of Christianity while denying the final authority of the Bible, there exists a fundamental inconsistency. A consistent hermeneutic requires a more credible rationale for selective use of scripture than Dr Owen provides. Similarly, what authority can be adduced for his concept of God? The almost impersonal language predicated of God runs counter to the personal God found in the Bible, in the teaching of Christ, and in orthodox Christianity. There is a danger that the resort to unstructured belief and private religion may result in a view of God formed according to what is acceptable to the human mind rather than to the self-disclosure of God in Christ, the Bible and the church.

Secondly, David Owen's optimistic view of man must remain open to question, as with David Steel and Tony

Benn. The hope that 'we will do better' is (setting aside the empirical evidence against such a view) at best only a weak and distorted reflection of the biblical understanding of what God will accomplish through Christ, and at worst a denial of the doctrines of the fall and the atonement. In biblical terms, our ground for optimism lies not in our capacity for self-improvement but in the grace of God which one day will totally redeem both individual lives and corporate structures.

Thirdly, can Dr Owen's emphasis on private religion ever be legitimate? St Paul repeatedly affirms the corporate nature of Christian life and worship in the metaphors he uses to illustrate the community of faith: the body of Christ, the people of God, the household of faith are but a few. For the New Testament writers (as for Christ himself) Christianity must be expressed in corporate life and worship, never solely through individual inwardness. It is unfortunate that Dr Owen, who places such emphasis on political fraternity and community, misses this crucial point.

Finally, what are we to make of his insistence that 'the diversity of human goals and aspirations cannot be evaluated by any universal criteria or subordinated to some transcendent purpose.'? (*Face the Future* p10). This would seem to rule out any possibility of a divine plan for human societies or individuals. It comes close to existential nihilism. The individual is left to work out his own purpose and meaning without recourse to an overarching or integrating principle. For the Christian such an approach must be disowned. From beginning to end (and supremely in the life of Christ) the Bible insists on the plan of God for men revealed in scripture and Jesus. It is not possible for Dr Owen to assert on one hand that 'I ... believe that God was made man and that Jesus Christ came on earth' and on the other to insist that 'we must go into the unknown, the uncertain and insecure, using what reason we may have to plan for both security and freedom.' (*Face the Future* p7) Furthermore, the suggestion that no universal criteria exist for measuring men's lives undercuts fundamental biblical teaching on God as creator, lawgiver, judge and redeemer. It is possible (though not conclusively) to see in the quasi-nihilism implicit in Owen's assertion an undermining of the pivotal truths of the gospel.

We are left then with a curious mixture of conventional Christian terminology allied to some doubtful conceptualisation. What is clear, however, is that David Owen is most definitely not 'authentically post-Christian', and that whatever criticisms may be made of his theology, his strong sense of moral rightness and his personal integrity reflect qualities which are essentially Christian. ●

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## Encounter

## The Victoria Institute

Graham Dove



In these days of rapid advances in science and changing ideas in other intellectual disciplines, the need for a coherent Christian world view is greater than ever before. Thinking Christians need to discuss the impact of new discoveries and attitudes in the fields relevant to their faith. Scientific developments frequently raise ethical and philosophical questions that have to be considered in the light of Christian belief, teachers need to grapple with new areas of knowledge and ways of learning, and theological students have to reappraise modern theories and critical insights into the Bible and related fields. All these require an opportunity for informed and scholarly discussion of the relations between current thought and the Christian faith. It is for this purpose that the Victoria Institute exists.

Founded in 1865 the society has had many famous presidents beginning with The Earl of Shaftesbury, and including Sir Frederick Kenyon, Professor F.F. Bruce, and currently Sir Norman Anderson; all of them contributing to promote the aims and ideals of the society.

Originally set up as a defence against the allegedly scientific attacks on the Christian faith by the followers of Darwin, the society now has a more constructive and forward-looking approach believing that all truth is one and that all true knowledge can be related to God's revealed truth. Hence a broad spectrum of views is encouraged with no one denominational or theological tradition prevailing, in the belief that in this way the nearest approach to truth is likely to be achieved.

The activities of the Institute reflect this approach of bringing recent developments and their implications to the attention of Christians through a

journal three times a year) and held annually in London, and occasionally elsewhere. The annual meeting often takes the form of a whole-day symposium on some issue. The journal, *Faith and Thought*, contains papers of relevant interest to members and provides room for discussion and debate, whilst the meetings provide more time for presentation and informed discussion of such matters.

Recent symposia have been on such topics as: sociology, modern culture and developments in biblical archaeology. Regular readers of *Third Way* will no doubt have seen the reports of these meetings held towards the end of May each year.

After 116 years the Institute is still unique in being the only learned society existing to relate science and the Christian faith. It does not see science as the enemy of faith but seeks to discover God's truth within its many forms. Its subtitle is the Philosophical Society of Great Britain, and sometimes the discussions have reached dizzy philosophical heights!

Yet for all its intellectual and academic interests the society is relevant

for all thinking Christians, for most of the points made and papers discussed are well within the grasp of the non-specialist. The value of the Institute lies in its willingness to grapple with new issues and ideas in order to learn the significance of them for Christian thought. This understanding it seeks to share with those who have the responsibility in the classroom and pulpit of guiding the thinking of others.

It does not seek to attack or discredit theories just because they are new, original, or seem to conflict with a traditional interpretation of the Bible. For the Institute is not afraid to take both Christian tradition and science to task, and in doing so to discover the truth behind them — which ultimately stems from God. Without such a valuable insight the Christian church would be the poorer and certainly less able to come to terms with modern thinking in its many and various forms.

For it is only by grappling with issues as they arise that the credibility of Christianity, as a religion relevant to this age, can be upheld for those inside as well as those outside the faith. And in discussing new developments within all areas of knowledge the church is better prepared to fight when the need arises, and where the real battle is. In providing a forum for discussion and debate the Victoria Institute adds its contribution to this struggle and prevents many of the weaknesses and shortcomings inherent in woolly thinking. For it is better to know one's enemy beforehand — how he thinks and how he is armed — than to face him unprepared and with weapons ill-suited to the task.

Further details of the Institute and its work can be obtained from: The Assistant Secretary, 29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. (Tel. 01-248-3642)

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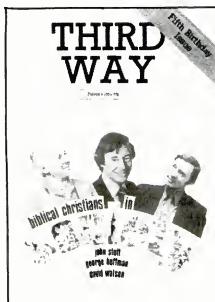
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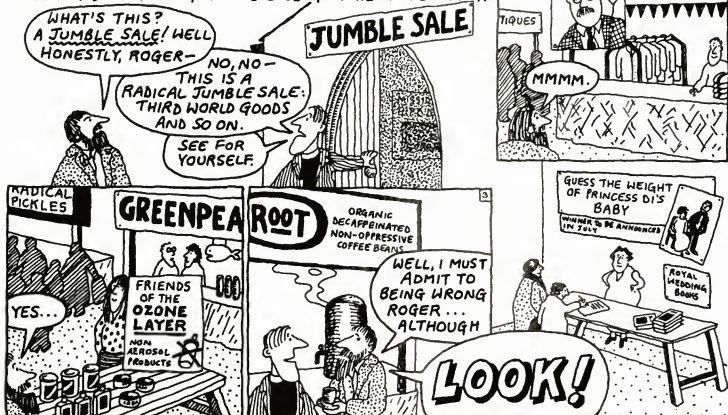
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# Yes, Jay Adams is biblical enough

**RAJU ABRAHAM** replies to **RICHARD WINTER'S** article on the counselling approach of **JAY ADAMS** which appeared in our April issue

In the April issue of *Third Way*, Dr Richard Winter acknowledged several values in the counselling writings of Dr Jay Adams. However, he stressed his misgivings as well: for example, 'a distorted theoretical emphasis that gives rise to unfortunate consequences in the practice of counselling', or 'a faulty view of common grace', or 'important Christian truths are slightly twisted and given an unhelpful emphasis', or 'a simplistic model', and so on. The title of the article 'Jay Adams—is he really biblical enough?', implied that not only was Jay Adams not biblical enough but that the writer would show how one could be more biblical. It is important to examine this, although lack of space means that I will have to restrict most of my observations.

## Quoting out of context

At several points Dr Adams is not adequately quoted. For example, Dr Winter quotes him as saying, 'nothing in the Bible indicates that one must wait for change. Everywhere, immediate if not complete change is pictured as possible' (*Competent to Counsel*, Baker Book House, 1970). However, the context of this quotation deals with change *however small*, and the hope for real change from a biblical perspective. Dr Winter comments that 'The biblical emphasis seems to be that once we become Christians (a change of "state" before God) we begin a "process" of change culminating in being made perfect when we are with the Lord. It is a movement *towards* maturity. Paul uses images of battle and struggle against sin. Dr Adams agrees with every word of this; indeed it is a repeated emphasis in his writings. He does not say that Christians can reach a state of 'sinless perfectionism' in this life, as Dr Winter implies, but he does stress strongly the biblical emphasis on change.

Then, is Jay Adams saying that the Christian's goal is usefulness, and not maturity, when he says 'restoration to usefulness therefore is the goal of Christian counselling'? This is again out of context, Jay Adams believes usefulness is one aspect of maturity.

Shortly after this reference, Richard

Winter states that 'Jay Adams seems to be saying that we are either mature and useful or immature and useless. It is one thing or the other.' But nowhere does Jay Adams say that if you are immature you are useless. What he does say is that undealt-with problems such as anger and depression can restrict one's Christian usefulness and that counselling can bring restoration.

Dr Winter also quotes frequently from Dr Adams' book *Ready to Restore*, (Baker Book House, 1981), a book expressly written for lay people and lacking the detailed argumentation of his other works.

## 'Acceptance' theology

Richard Winter's comments above are followed by a statement that, 'Unlike the present culture, God accepts us for who we are and not for what we achieve'. It is true that God accepts us for who we are *in Christ*, but he does in fact expect us to grow as Christians (as Dr Winter has already said). This should be done in the power of the Holy Spirit using biblical principles such as those illustrated in Philippians 2.12 and 13 ('continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose'); 1 Corinthians 3.11-15 (the quality of each individual's building upon the foundations of Christ) and Revelation ch.1-3 (the letters to the seven churches).

## Unwarranted inferences

Richard Winter goes on to say 'I would imagine those who find it difficult to change rapidly do not stay with Adams and are seen by him not as failures of his theory or method, but rather as people who are in deep rebellion or sin. It goes without saying that this may be damaging to such individuals.' Surely in evaluating another's views in a critique, one ought not to 'imagine' but stick to facts. Jay Adams certainly does not view all failure as counsellor failure, though some is, and in that sense Jesus 'failed' with the rich young ruler and Paul 'failed' with Demas. They were not prepared to follow counsel. Jay Adams is the only Christian writer in this area who lists 50 causes of failure, most of which relate to the inadequacy of the counsellor. (See *Update in Christian Counselling*, 1979, *The Christian Counsellors' Manual*, 1973, both Baker Book House, and *Christian Counsellors' New*

*Testament*, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977).

In a similar vein, Dr Winter extends Jay Adams' views to indicate a total condemnation of Christian involvement in politics. This is simply *not* true.

## Questionable biblical exegesis

Dr Winter writes, 'It appears there is little concern about taking time to help someone unravel the threads of a difficult past, to face up to and come to terms with scars and wounds and then deal more effectively with them... any weakness or vulnerability due to emotional or social deprivation appears to be seen by Adams as rebellion or sin.'

Several undefined figures of speech which have strong emotional connotations are used here. But can Winter say that they grow out of biblical categories? He goes on to equate them with Paul's thorn in the flesh. 'I believe that it may also be necessary for some Christians to come to terms with weaknesses and vulnerabilities caused through the general effects of sins and the fall and which may be to them a "mental thorn in the flesh" for most of their lives.'

Exegeses speculate as to what Paul's thorn in the flesh was (2 Corinthians 12.7) but one thing certain is that it was in the flesh. It is frightening to see scriptural language used to convey concepts not intended by the New Testament writer. Psychotherapeutic terminology should not be given the ring of biblical authority by the use of quasi-biblical language.

## Unsubstantiated charges

The article makes serious charges against the counselling method of Dr Adams, the most weighty of which is, 'The more severe the psychological problem the less applicable his approach.' Dr Winter needs to show that people trained in the principles Jay Adams advocates have applied them and failed because of the method, after adequate follow up. However, no such evidence is offered.

Such principles include the following:

- a. A biblical understanding of the counsellor's problem, stemming from
- b. A clear understanding of the Holy Spirit's thrust...in scriptural passages appropriate to both the problem and the solution and
- c. A meeting of man's problem and God's full solution in counselling according to
- d. The formulation of a biblical plan of action leading toward
- e. Commitment to scriptural action by the counsellor. (*Lectures on Counselling*, 1978, p.192. See also *The Christian Counsellor's Manual*, pp 161-216, and *More than Redemption*, 1979, pp184-248, all Baker Book House.)

Dr Winter, by asking 'how would Adams deal with a depressed person who is so withdrawn that he cannot talk or a person so deluded that she believes that she is being poisoned?', implies that Dr Adams' approach can have little to say to such people. This is untrue; there are fully explained suggestions for dealing with such situations, for instance, in *Update in Christian Counselling*, vol. 1. Perhaps

he is asking if Dr Adams is against the use of drugs. In fact, he is not, depending, of course, on the purpose for which they are used.

### Areas of disagreement

Inaccuracies aside, there are areas of real and serious disagreement between what Dr Winter believes and what Dr Adams writes.

There is firstly a need to clarify terms which may be used differently on opposite sides of the Atlantic. 'Psychology' is the discipline which investigates how we see, hear, remember, etc. Clinical psychology is the application of the above to medical situations, eg I Q tests for dementia, tests for dyslexia, etc. Dr Adams believes that these are legitimate disciplines and refers to them, for instance, in *Pulpit Speech* (1971, Baker Book House).

Sometimes these terms are used more loosely and overlap with 'psychotherapy' or, 'counselling' which have to do with changing people, their thinking and behaviour through talk. Here is part of a standard definition of psychotherapy used widely in research: 'assisting individuals to modify such personal characteristics as feelings, attitudes and behaviours which are judged by the therapist to be inadequate or maladaptive.'<sup>1</sup> Stripped of jargon, this is talking about the problems a person has with himself, with others, eg. wife, children, parents, work, neighbours, etc. and, (we would add) with God. These can be summarised in the two commandments, loving God and loving one's neighbour, on which Jesus said hang all the law and the prophets.

When one is talking about psychotherapeutic (counselling) systems, one is not speaking of an enterprise such as medicine, but of religious ideologies with values, goals, attitudes, behaviour, and resources and methods for changing people. Thus they are as clearly religious as Hinduism or Islam. This is no new view of them and people without the maverick reputation of Thomas Szasz and R.D. Laing have held it.<sup>2</sup>

Psychotherapeutic research is dogged by difficulties, the discussion of which is beyond the scope of this article. For those interested there has been a good review published.<sup>3</sup>

In the USA, after an extensive study by a Senate committee, this was said: 'Based upon evaluation of the literature no controlled clinical studies conducted and evaluated in accordance with generally accepted scientific principles confirm the efficacy, safety and appropriateness of psychotherapy as it is conducted today.'<sup>4</sup> There may be good reasons why this is the case, but space does not allow a discussion of them here.

*Psychotherapy* is the area that Adams questions in all his writings and when psychiatrists enter into the field of changing people through talk, they usurp what is legitimately the area of the Christian minister. 'What is it then that a psychiatrist mainly does if he does not do medical work, if he is not really a medical specialist?' asks Jay Adams in *The Big Umbrella* (1972, Baker Book House). 'He talks...to

people about their problems...to eliminate the pressures, the tensions, the difficulties and the terrible tangles into which their lives have been raveled. And this he does by talking... there is nothing particularly medical about solving problems by talk...So I say that the psychiatrist has usurped the work of the physician, but mostly of the preacher. And he engaged in this work without warrant from God, without the aid of the scriptures (in almost every case) and without regard to the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus he seeks to change the behaviour and the values of people in an ungodly manner. (Psalm 1.1) Insofar as he succeeds, the results may be feared.'

Richard Winter asks if there are no truths in these psychotherapeutic methodologies? Dr Adams would say, of course there are, but no more than any other religion. Does that mean that Christians should spend their time searching out how to apply other religions to their own lives? Instead, should we not be applying the scriptures by the power of the Holy Spirit carefully and fearlessly to every facet of our own lives and counselling those we help to do the same? The attempt to integrate or syncretise non-Christian thought into the Christian life style is not new.

Dr Winter traces Adams' views to an origin in Van Til's presuppositionalist apologetic. However, one can take a common sense approach to knowing where the Bible does apply. The main purpose of the Bible is to change people in a radical way before God and their neighbour.

From the above flow three 'important consequences', says Dr Winter. Firstly, the area of counselling unbelievers; secondly, the image of God in the unbeliever, and thirdly, insights of secular psychology and psychiatry (more properly defined as psychotherapy).

On the first, Dr Adams would say that as the business of changing people is the work par excellence of the Christian minister (though also the responsibility of all Christians as well, see Galatians 6.1-5), one must use the resources that God has given in the Bible, evangelism in counselling, the Holy Spirit, prayer, scriptural methods being a few. In his 30-odd books Jay Adams gives hundreds of practical ways in which the scriptures apply to life. This work has been extended by others into the areas of interpersonal relationships, premarital and marital counselling, and bringing up children.<sup>5</sup>

### No mental illness

The question of insights from secular psychology and psychiatry have been largely dealt with above. More than that, is Jay Adams saying that there is no mental illness? He does say that there is nothing in the Bible that approximates to the modern concept of mental illness. He denies that his delineation of the two aspects of man is dualistic. He says that the moral can influence the organic and the organic can influence the moral. He reiterates in his writings the unity of man and this leads him to work closely with physicians.

Dr Winter seems to propose that there

is a third area in which human beings develop problems. This area has moral consequences but no moral causation; it has organic consequences but no organic causation. A person thus 'afflicted' may not change very readily or even at all, even if he becomes a Christian, sincerely desirous of change and faithfully applying biblical principles in the power of the Holy Spirit. 'It may also be necessary for some Christians to come to terms with weaknesses and vulnerabilities caused through the general effects of sin and the fall...for most of their lives', says Dr Winter. If this is so, isn't it odd that Paul failed to mention it in writing to new Christians in such sin-drenched cities as Corinth, Rome and Ephesus? Many of these people must have grown up in homes where (if Dr Winter is right) we may assume 'scars and wounds', were inflicted by pagan parents.

Not only is the New Testament silent about such an area but rather seems to be saying the opposite. (1 Corinthians 6.9-11)

Is it credible that God, when inspiring the New Testament writings, left us uninformed for over 1900 years about these important 'insights', allowing the church to flounder until modern-day psychotherapists revealed them to us?

The idea that there is a 'third area' of counselling problems, however, is not an uncommon view among psychiatrists. (Many non-Christian psychiatrists, of course, reject a moral area and for them there are only two.) Such differences indicate the fragmentation and division present in psychiatry, in contrast to a medical speciality like cardiology. <sup>6</sup> (For example, if someone came to me for a moderate or severe depression for which there was no organic cause, in London I could find a psychiatrist who would administer the treatment of the counsellor's choice. This might be electroconvulsive therapy, used by 72 percent of psychiatrists in the UK, drugs or one of the dozens of divergent psychotherapeutic 'talk' therapies that are currently available.)

We should welcome all attempts to be more biblical, but I think Dr Winter has failed to demonstrate that Jay Adams is not biblical enough.

Christians need not be cowed by non-Christian philosophies in the guise of specialised knowledge. Rather, we should humble ourselves before God's living word. Dr Adams has addressed some fundamental issues. He has renewed confidence in the scriptures as a resource for living.

### Notes

1. J. Metzoff and M. Kornreich, 'Research into Psychotherapy', Acherton, 1970.
2. P. London, 'The Modes and Morals of Psychotherapy'.
3. S. Bloch et al, 'Outcome of Psychotherapy evaluated by independent judges', *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 1977, Vol. 131 pp 410-414.
4. 'Science', 1980, Vol 207 p 30.
5. Wayne Mack, 'The Christian Counsellor's Homework Manual', Vol 1 and II, *Presbyterian and Reformed*.
6. A. Clare, 'Dissent in Psychiatry', 1976, Tavistock.

# Reaction

## Recognising the value of work

Howard Davis and David Perkins (March issue) gave us a concise and searching analysis of the origins of the employment problem in Britain today, with which I have no real quarrel. Where I do have misgivings, however, is in their prescription of a recommitment to the full employment policies of the 1950s and 60s as a way forward which presumably they wish Christians to adopt.

To begin with, they are extremely vague about how this might be achieved, other than by 'making work allocation a more collective responsibility'. But what might this mean? Gentle incentives to industry through 'enterprise zones'? Or a massive programme of nationalisation

under workers' control? Or perhaps the compulsory direction of labour? We are not told.

Secondly, the policy of full employment, as traditionally understood, is itself open to question. If society demoralises the unemployed by recognising paid employment as the only valuable form of work, then we can either seek to ensure that everybody has paid employment, or we can strive towards the popular acceptance of a fundamental redefinition of what counts as valuable work. Davis and Perkins advocate the former, whereas I believe that the latter is more in keeping with the tenor of scripture which tends to regard any activity which develops the created order for the benefit of mankind and the glory of God as valuable work. The church's duty lies in getting the state to recognise this radical redefinition of work in its social and economic policy.

How might this be done? I will give just two small examples. The abolition

of the married man's tax allowance and its replacement by a universal maternity benefit, paid weekly to mothers of all children under 16, would give formal recognition to the hitherto undervalued work of mothers in rearing children. The introduction of a small hourly payment for voluntary work, fully disregarded for social security purposes, would also give formal recognition to the work of volunteers in supporting the social services. The work could be attested by a recognised volunteer organiser, and the payment claimed from the DHSS. Neither of these proposals is likely to reduce formal unemployment a great deal. What they would do would be to raise the status of certain work activities not formally recognised in the occupational hierarchy.

The key issue then is not the allocation of work, as Messrs Davis and Perkins suggest, but the allocation of status and reward to some forms of work rather than others. Ultimately, the church must be involved in challenging the power structures which are responsible for the injustice of this allocation.

Graham Bowpitt  
Nottingham.

## National conservatism

With reference to the article by Howard Davis and David Perkins in the March issue (Whatever happened to 'full employment?'), I found myself greatly helped by the review of what has happened in relation to thinking about employment and how expediency has tempered the approach with successive governments.

I find myself supporting the re-evaluation of 'the purpose and meaning of employment' and the goal of 'full employment', but I believe there is a difficulty unremarked in the second reason put forward for a policy of full employment. Half-way through that paragraph the authors say 'By making work allocation a more collective responsibility than it is now, all of those involved in the work process would be forced to question and decide on matters like the implementation of the "new technology".'

In our nation particularly we are not known for readily changing our ways, and fairly recent events have indicated that where a change of approach to methods is mooted, there is opposition. 'Flexible rotas' may have been hastily pushed forward by British Rail management but, as far as I can see, the Rail Union has hardly given it a thought before saying it is not acceptable. Most changes for improvement, even with full consultation, seem to require a generation which, at the present time, is hardly a 'short term' possibility.

Our national conservatism could be a

stumbling block on the way to full employment and 'employment as a right', but I still pray for the day.

Rev W. John Wyatt  
London, SW14

## Inadequate Christian work ethic

Tony Walter (April issue) has drawn attention to a neglected part of our argument as it relates to the non-employed population, especially women. Neither of us live in villages run by middle-class ladies and we wonder what evidence there is that women run the parish councils, PCCs and school Boards of Governors in such communities! We would suggest that the social status of non-employed, married women is essentially derived from their husband's role in 'informal economy'. It is through their husband's occupation and earnings that they have access to the wider society.

It follows that the majority of women are not *directly* comparable to the unemployed. On the other hand, because they do not have access in their own right to social recognition and rewards, they are 'second class' citizens, as feminists would generally claim.

One response is to suggest that women should be granted full rights of participation in employment and that nursery facilities should be expanded accordingly. Another is to suggest that domestic labour and child-rearing be re-valued by means of dramatically increased benefits to

dependants, especially child benefits. It is a measure of the inadequacy of our Christian work ethic as presently conceived that it does not provide clear guidelines about the choices involved in these two alternatives.

David Perkins  
Howard Davis  
University of Kent at Canterbury

## Open reply

Although I have read Steve Parish's letter several times (May issue), I'm still not clear what his niggle is. First, he seems to scout the idea of being a 'nuclear pacifist', mocks me for speaking as if I had my own nuclear weapon which I've disarmed, and likens me to a legless football manager. But I cannot see why my admitted 'leglessness' should disqualify me from urging the legged not to kick people. Secondly, he calls me 'a private dove'. But I cannot see how a public pulpit statement of nuclear pacifism can be called 'private'.

I suspect his real disagreement is that I said I wouldn't 'plead with people to adopt the same position'. All I meant by this is that I do not think one should use the pulpit to 'plead' a controversial viewpoint as the only one biblical Christians can hold. This does not stop me from arguing the case, however, which I do both publicly and privately.

Rev John Stott  
London W1.

## Patriotism

With reference to John Gladwin's article on the Falkland Islands in the May issue, I should like to point out that it was Edith Cavell, not Sitwell, who said 'Patriotism is not enough; I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone'.

I feel that Christian pacifism means living the life of the peaceable kingdom, living by Jesus' standards even though the rest of the world does not accept them.

Beth Allen  
London, NY

*Our apologies, Ed.*

## Missionary contradictions

The Rev Theo Samuel's letter in your April issue expressed clearly some of the contradictions inherent in being a missionary. To me it felt right that an Indian Christian should draw our attention to this, and I want to express my support for the reservations about missionary privilege and segregation expressed in Mr Samuel's letter.

I wish I could affirm all he says about the availability of qualified Indian Christians for the vacancies in the advertisement which stimulated his letter. Several years ago, I remember that the desire of the CSI Diocese of Madak to appoint Christians to diocesan schools was frequently frustrated because suitably qualified Christians were either not available or not offering themselves. Christian hospitals in India are often having to appoint non-Christian staff to senior positions. A few weeks ago, when I asked why very few Christians were on the staff of the CNI Lucknow Diocesan educational institutions, in Allahabad, Varanasi, Azamgarh and Gorakhpur, the answer was invariably the same. Qualified Christians were not available.

It might well be argued that the affluent Christian west has encouraged the brain drain which created this shortage of qualified Christians in India. It would, however, be difficult to justify depriving already hard-pressed Indian church institutions of Christian teachers simply to cater for what is very much a minority need.

The major question, however, is whether separate provision should be made for the education of expatriate children, particularly the children of missionaries.

In most urban centres in India, English medium education is available, though admittedly only to the relatively wealthy and privileged. Should the expatriate community reinforce these divisive structures of privilege within

Indian society itself, and would it earn our commendation for doing so?

Complete integration would imply using the local vernacular school system, but the prevailing situation makes it difficult to insist on this. Indian children who have been out of India for even a short time find re-entry into the vernacular almost impossible, and few attempt it. Similar constraints work in the opposite direction.

At secondary level, the syllabus in Indian schools, in all states, is incompatible with the requirements of 'O' and 'A' level examinations in the UK, unless the children go to very specialised schools on their return. Admission to tertiary education in the UK is problematic at the best of times.

Many missionaries are acutely conscious of the dangers involved. By sending their children to special schools they risk alienating the sympathy and understanding of their colleagues. They risk their children developing expectations of privileged treatment, with all the appalling social consequences that entails. On the other hand, unless they arrange for education which will equip their children for life in their countries of origin, they will be accused of gross irresponsibility and neglect. Some resolve the ambiguity either by terminating their service overseas or by arranging for their children to be educated in their home countries. It would be unfortunate to suggest that the majority of missionaries were insensitive to the issues involved.

Perhaps we need to remember that, in today's world, when churches invite missionaries and when churches send missionaries, the greatest threats to the spirituality of the people involved come from the inescapable contradictions which they vicariously carry on behalf of us all.

Gordon Shaw  
*Area Secretary for Asia and the Pacific,  
Methodist Missionary Society.*

## Good example

I am more than happy to respond to Rev Theo Samuel's letter (April) entitled 'Missionary Racism', having had my three sons educated at Hebron school. I can assure him that his fears are unfounded.

The advert about the school is admittedly a little misleading. About a third of the students are in fact of Indian or Asian origin, and my sons formed friendships with some of them, which still continue four years after leaving the school. The school is one of the best examples I've

seen of racial integration.

There are ample opportunities for the students to join in the worship and witness of Indian churches, and they have developed a more healthy non-racist attitude than many supposedly more enlightened Christians in the west.

The recruitment of Indian Christian staff has been looked at positively by the school council, but because of the government of India's restrictions and other factors (such as salary levels), the matter is not nearly so simple as Theo Samuel makes out.

Would expatriate Indian Christians now living in the west be willing to return to India to serve this excellent Christian international school?

John Martin  
Cambridge.

## Moral standards in society

Andrew Duffell says ('Reaction' May issue) 'Socialist panaceas may seem more Christian — but they ignore man's sinful, human nature.' 'Socialism', of course, is a blanket term which covers many different schemes. But leaving this point aside, Mr Duffell's letter illustrates a very common Christian fallacy. One does not hear people saying 'Monogamous marriages may seem more Christian — but they ignore man's sinful, human nature'. In terms of personal morality, Christians set up moral standards. The inevitable failure to live up to those standards does not result in a lowering of the moral sights.

Yet this is what happens when we consider society; and why? We may not set ourselves standards which are lower than perfection. The fallacy arises because people still think of Christianity only in terms of the personal. The political is only relevant when it impinges on our Christian Moral Values (the family, sex etc). In fact, every action we perform has two simultaneous effects; in the personal sphere, the one-to-one level, and the wider social sphere, influencing the wider social environment which affects all the other individuals in society. Thus both the personal and the political must be seen as equally important, and the same standards must apply.

We do not of course ignore man's sinful human nature. Christian socialists are both idealists and realists; idealistic in their standards, and realistic in terms of what they expect to be achieved.

Kevin Probert  
Sheffield, Yorks.



# Chronicle

## Bleak outlook for homeless

It is not only inadequate, middle-aged drunks who tramp the streets of our cities looking for somewhere dry and out of the wind to spend the night; a recent government report, *Single and Homeless*, (HMSO, £9.50) revealed that a quarter of the single homeless in our large cities (there are 62,000 homeless people in England alone, according to official statistics) are women and one-third are under 30 years old. Neither can we dismiss them as society's inevitable failures, those who have never tried or never succeeded at anything, since over half of them have had some kind of higher education or training.

Four main British churches have issued a joint statement in response to the report, calling for urgent government action to help the single homeless. The Church of England Board for Social Responsibility, the Methodist Church Division of Social Responsibility, the Church and Society Department of the United Reformed Church and the Catholic Housing Aid Society are calling for the extension of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 to give all single people the right to secure accommodation.

They want the section of the Act that deals with the 'intentionally homeless' repealed. They believe that this section of the Act is being grossly misused by some local authorities; in the last two years there has been an 82 per cent increase in the number of people refused housing assistance on the grounds that their situation is 'intentional'. They are calling on the government to increase resources available to local authorities, especially in the inner city areas in order for them to provide housing for the single. And they are most urgently calling for an increase in local authority investment in housing.

Soon after the churches' statement was published, it was revealed that public spending on housing is likely to be cut by 20 per cent next year (housing has already been the most severely reduced of the Conservative government's programmes). The Association of Metropolitan Authorities has estimated that, because of inflation, it would be necessary to spend an extra £3,501 million in 1983/4 just to hold the housing programme at its present level, but in its latest public spending White Paper the government has only allowed an increase of £2,760 million. Since most local authorities have already pared their council house subsidies to the bone,

they will be forced to cut their capital investment in housing, which can only lead to a continued rise in the number of those who live without a home in our cities.

Claire Disbrey

## Television ministry

A study sponsored by the World Association for Christian Communication has suggested the setting up of 'Air-Care Fellowships', which would be related to existing churches in the same way as the Open University is to the established universities. WACC sponsored Peter Heinze (who originated Granada's 'Reports Action' programme) to undertake a feasibility study in television ministry. The study discusses what is being done in this field at present and suggests several ways of achieving a nationwide, locally-based pastoral care support system, linked to television programmes.

The report, *Air-Care, a Feasibility Study in Television Ministry*, suggests

that, while radio and television can provide information and advice for those in trouble, and radio phone-in programmes can go some way in providing a 'listening ear', the need for 'an understanding heart' can only be achieved by referring people to someone who can offer them personal pastoral care.

Mr Heinze suggests the setting up of six regional 'broadcast churches', 'Air-Care Fellowships', run by an ecumenical team ministry and supported by local Christians. About half of the broadcast services would come from these churches. The forms of worship would not always be traditional but it would be hoped that the ministers involved would, in time, become familiar to the viewers. During the services viewers would be invited to contact the Air-Care Fellowship if they wished to raise any points or worries connected with the theme of the programme. Those who did so would be referred to other appropriate organisations, given advice or help over the telephone, or offered pastoral counselling.

Peter Heinze concludes in his report that the future of 'television ministry' largely depends upon the response the broadcasters get from the churches — on whether they are willing and able to co-operate in this sort of venture.

Claire Disbrey



Peter Heinze of Granada Television (right) with Dr Hans Florin, general secretary of WACC.

## Unexpected allies

They are unexpected allies but the United Kingdom Temperance Alliance, itself unable to campaign for law reform because of its status as a registered charity, finds itself in full support of proposals for change set before the Home Office by the National Union of Licensed Victuallers.

The NULV report, 'A Case for Change', presumably designed to protect the interests of members, the reputation

and dignity of the trade and the position of licensed premises as the main purveyors of alcoholic drinks, puts forward a number of proposals which temperance organisations would welcome.

New outlets (on or off license) should not be opened if existing facilities are adequate. Licence applications should not be accepted from anyone who has not gone through and passed

and examination in a recognised training scheme. Tighter controls should be imposed on supermarket sales, notably the banning of self-service and the restriction of trading to 'licensed hours'.

The recent Home Office reply to the report has proved disappointing to both organisations however. On most of the points at issue it said there was no evidence that change was really necessary, nor that it would decrease or solve any of the attendant problems of alcohol sales, namely drunkenness and abuse. More specifically, it saw no link between any increase in problem amongst 'vulnerable groups' (such as children) and growing numbers of off-licence suppliers. 'The licensing law does not exist to protect the on-licensed Trade from competition', the Home Office concluded, rejecting any further controls.

News is not all bad for the temperance movement however. Inflation, high unemployment and economic recession coupled with the changing tastes and demands of consumers who are increasingly 'drinking at home' has reduced beer production to its lowest level since 1973 and the Scotch Whisky Association has reported a 5% drop in volume sales during 1981, citing increased duty as a further 'threat' to trade.

Barry Etheridge

## The library and the church

Libraries and churches have a great deal in common. They both need to do more to attract new members, and should be concerned with creating a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. They are both under pressure to become involved in political activism, yet both have traditions which should not be lightly discarded. Both institutions have been traditionally linked with the printed word, and need to come to terms with the new communications technology.

These were some of the conclusions to emerge from the annual conference of the Librarians' Christian Fellowship, held in London in April. Ken Bakewell, from Liverpool Polytechnic, pointed out that the Church of England had once been known as the Conservative Party at prayer. There was a danger that the pendulum had now swung too far in the opposite direction. He had recently heard a clergyman in a TV discussion imply that it was the church's duty to serve only those members of the working class who vote Labour. The Church could not divorce itself from politics, which is a major part of the real world, but neither should it be seen as the limb

of one political party.

In the same way, Mr Bakewell said that he had been disturbed by several participants in a recent BBC radio series on public libraries who suggested that librarians should concentrate on serving working class needs to the exclusion of other interests. He felt that libraries should be politically neutral, making a point of giving both sides of controversial issues, with material for and against Cruise missiles, proportional representation, or CND.

The challenge of new technology was taken up by a later speaker, Rev Ronald Englund, the Information Officer with the World Association for Christian Communication. He suggested that we might be living through a communication revolution as significant as that which followed the invention of printing. Home communications sets would soon link each household with computerised networks which would open up thousands of communication possibilities. The role of libraries as information providers might be enhanced, but their traditional role of promoting literature might diminish, although books would not go completely out of fashion.

'The question is whether this wonderful technology will help us to be more human, said Mr Englund, 'or will it be used to dehumanise people . . . to

## Memorandum

### Bereavement organisation

Cruse, the national organisation for the widowed and their children, now have 76 branches throughout Britain and, with several more opening this year, are on the way to their target of 240. Some 2000 volunteers are now involved in providing the Cruse service. At their recent annual conference they announced a major conference on 'Bereavement following Violence', to take place in September 1983, the launch of a new video film 'Living through Loss' and a new journal. The journal, called 'Bereavement Care', is edited by Dr Dora Black and Dr Murray Parkes, will be published three times a year, and is intended for Cruse workers and all who help the bereaved. Details: Cruse House, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR.

### Scarman conference

The Evangelical Race Relations Group are organising a day conference on June 19 at Emmanuel Church in north London entitled 'Remember Scarman - a Christian response to Britain's crisis'. Details: Sue Conlan, 8 Oxford St., Nottingham (0602 40876).

### Book congress

The UNESCO World Congress on Books is to take place in London from 7-11 June. The Congress aims to agree a

programme for world-wide action for the book professions, UNESCO and the national authorities, and is for those concerned with books and their vital role in society, education and social and economic development. UNESCO have invited several hundred individual participants and observers who are authorities on the subjects to be discussed, from the industrialised and the developing countries.

### Billin gual film

*Scripture Union and BMMF International have produced a unique film strip, 'Mohinder', with a choice of soundtracks - one in English and one in Hindi. Designed for evangelism with Asian adults and young people, it tells the true story of a high caste Indian Sikh in Britain. Details of hire and sale prices from: SU Mail Order Dept., PO Box 38, Bristol BS9 7NA.*

### Church Army Sunday

13 June has been designated 'Church Army Sunday', in this year of their centenary. On Wednesday 9 June there will be a National Thanksgiving Service in Westminster Abbey, attended by HM the Queen, at which the Archbishop of York will preach. Founded in late 1881 by Prebendary Wilsons Carlile, the Church Army, with trained lay 'officers', works in evangelism and a wide and impressive range of social work.

### Shaftesbury Lecture

*The Shaftesbury Project (on Christian involvement in society) are holding their first Annual public lecture at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, on Wednesday 23 June at 7.30. The Rt Revd David Sheppard will speak on 'Understanding the Word of God for Rich and Poor'. Details: Shaftesbury Project (SL) 8 Oxford Street, Nottingham NG1 5BH.*

### Dundee Festival

A festival to celebrate the gospel and explore discipleship will take place in and around the City Centre Churches in Dundee on 25-27 June. Called 'God and the Broken Community', it aims to help young Christians seeking to understand their faith, and work out commitment to Christ in today's culture. There will be drama, mime, puppets, music, preaching, seminars, workshops and worship. Further details: Mary Slessor Centre, Overgate, Dundee.

### Evangelism in context

The London Institute of Contemporary Christianity is holding a week-end seminar on 18-20 June at Windmill House, Birmingham. The speakers are Colin Chapman, Patrick Dearnley and Andrew Kirk and the aims are to explore the full meaning of the gospel and examine its relationship to different cultural and social situations in Britain, and to discuss how the church may adapt to meet the challenge of evangelising the least responsive areas of our country.

## Britain in brief

### TV violence

A recent government study from America has come to the conclusion that the evidence is 'overwhelming' that watching television violence leads to aggressive behaviour in young people. The study, carried out by the National Institute of Mental Health, is being heavily criticised, not surprisingly, by US television companies. Research projects quoted in the report include one of London teenage boys which showed they were more likely to engage in serious violence after watching violent scenes on television. Another study found 'unwarranted aggressive behaviour in free play' among children of pre-school age who had just watched violent programmes. The question now, says the report, is no longer whether the link between TV violence and aggressive behaviour existed, but what explains it.

### No national curriculum

The government has rejected the suggestion of the all-party Education Select Committee, that the Education Secretary should be given extra powers to cope with any local shortfall in educational provision. One of the Select Committee's central concerns, in its report to which the government was replying, was that the government should move towards some nationally agreed scheme of what should be covered in school teaching, and that this agreed curriculum should have an important part in determining the staffing of schools and the calculation of the educational grant related expenditure for each local authority. The government's reply is that this would presuppose the adoption of 'a particular national curriculum pattern, and this seems neither desirable nor necessary at this stage'.

### Capital punishment

In Parliament's first debate on capital punishment for three years, MPs spent a day discussing new clauses which would restore the death penalty for a number of different crimes. In 1979 they voted by 362 to 243 against the general principle of restoring the death penalty; this time they voted by 357 to 195 against the return of the death penalty for murder, and by 332 to 208 against the return of the death penalty for terrorist killings.

### Cable 'watchdog'

The British Film Institute recently called for a consumer 'watchdog' body for cable television, in response to the Cabinet Office report on cable expansion and broadcasting policy. The Institute points out that the most important area



Gladwin

## The great divide — East and West

The Russians (Marxist-Leninists) have shown sympathy for the Argentinians (fascist dictatorship) in their dispute with Britain (liberal democratic). Mrs Thatcher has spoken out against the fascist character of Argentinian rule. The Socialist Workers Party members have been shouting for a (fascist) Argentinian victory over the British navy. It all sounds pretty topsy-turvy. Communists and Marxists are speaking up for fascists (the heroes of the Spanish Civil War struggle against Franco must be turning in their graves!) and right-wing governments who have long preferred virtually anything to Marxist rule have suddenly found a moral conscience about fascism. At first sight it hardly seems an encouragement to ideological or moral consistency.

Yet against the background of the present international scene such stances make some political sense. Seeing a dispute such as that concerning the Falkland Islands in isolation might only serve to confuse the observer. Behind this and other struggles in the modern world lies the basic power conflict between East and West. Indeed, a case could be made out in criticism of the Brandt Report, that in talking about North and South it misses the crunch division of our world into East and West. No wonder, then that the Americans pulled out all the stops to try and settle the South Atlantic dispute. Division in one's own house in a world decidedly balanced between East and West is a recipe for weakness. The loss of influence in South America and the advance of the Cuban cause which might conceivably follow from Argentinian defeat and from hostile reaction to US support for Britain, could affect the balance of power in the modern world. At least, this is a possible strategic scenario and one which jittery governments might take seriously.

For all the many things which have happened in post 1945 international politics — the rise of China, the decolonisation of most of Africa and Asia etc — the central reality of international affairs remains the East-West divide.

Assessing the issues at stake in East-West relations involves a complexity of approaches. Understanding the

ideological divide between liberal democratic traditions and Marxist-Leninist traditions is one such area of concern. Others will include a grasp of the history and development of these power blocks, an understanding of the different experiences of East and West in the conflict with Germany in the last war, and an analysis of the psychology of mutual fear.

Communication between East and West can be a means to enable us not only to a better understanding but also to seek some resolution in our relationships. Here the Christian church has a part to play. Over the last few years greater efforts have been made to establish good communication with the churches of Eastern Europe and to recognise the diversity of their situation, of their theology and experience. The recent Peace Conference held in Moscow by the churches and attended by delegates from the West is an example of one form of communication which could be fruitful in creative relationships. These things are, of course, used by politicians to justify their position for propaganda purposes. Whilst this must be recognised it does not necessarily rule out the validity of the exercise. In the end, peace is dependent on East and West finding ways of living in relationship without threat and without compromising their integrity.

There are issues for which we need each other's experience and insight. What is to be the form of the relationship of the church to the modern state where the state is no longer confessedly Christian? That is: not just an issue for the Marxist-Leninist world. It is one for us as well. How do we respond to the different ideologies which seek to shape the conscience of people today? How do we respond to the great modern systems of power in political and economic life? What can we learn from each other about the process of power? Behind the rigid realities of the division of power in our world the Christian community can be raising questions, identifying areas of common concern, and doing its theology in consequence. Thus we might expose ourselves and our world to the Word of God for the history of East and West.

John Gladwin

of public intervention is to control content to enable fair competition with conventional television (cable operators could in combination, for instance, outbid the BBC and independent ITV for important national events which would then be available only to cable subscribers).

### Poverty line

The family expenditure survey — a biennial analysis of poverty in Britain — is not going to be published this year as usual, in order to save taxpayers' money, said government ministers recently in Parliament. Shortly afterwards, Mr Norman Fowler, the Social Services Secretary, revealed that the number of people claiming supplementary benefit is about to pass the four million mark, the highest figure ever recorded. This figure does not adequately reflect the number living on or below the British 'poverty line' of supplementary benefit level, since it was also revealed that in 1979 one in three people entitled to receive supplementary benefit did not claim it, because of ignorance of their right to claim, and it is likely that these proportions have not substantially changed. Another recent report, published by the Low Pay Unit, shows that because most of the income of the poorest families is spent on rent, power and food, inflation for them is running at 14 per cent instead of the 12 per cent faced by the average family. Several charities and MPs are taking action to try and persuade the government to drop its plans to cut the rise in supplementary benefit next year from 11 per cent to 10½ per cent.

### Non-white security?

In an interview with the *Guardian* newspaper, Mr Timothy Raison, Minister of State in charge of immigration and race relations at the Home Office, said in early May that he thinks the new British Nationality Act will eventually 'give a greater sense of security', and that the Urban Aid programme and forthcoming changes in the Local Government Act will make sure that more resources go into inner-city areas where many non-white people live. The Urban Aid programme allows central government to give grants of up to 75 per cent towards local council projects for improving city life. A section of the Local Government Act which provides for the government to pay the salaries of people in projects designed to help Commonwealth immigrants is being widened in scope by the government, although not as widely as the Scarman Report suggested. The government's proposals for reforming the police complaints procedure are still awaited. Mr Raison was unable to say whether Lord Scarman's other main proposal concerning the police — that there should be statutory police-community liaison — will be carried out.

## Critique Extra

# Art and the world of the 20th century

CALVIN SEERVELD and NICHOLAS WOLTERSTORFF  
review one another's books

## NICHOLAS WOLTERSTORFF

### RAINBOWS FOR THE FALLEN WORLD

Calvin Seerveld  
Downsview, Ontario:  
Toronto Tuppence Press, 254pp, £.  
Toronto Tuppence Press, 254pp, \$9.95

For the most part Seerveld and I agree in our Christian perspective on art and the aesthetic. We both place art in the context of the Christian confession of God as creator. And we both draw the conclusion that aesthetics is not merely a matter of taste. Quite to the contrary. There are aesthetic responsibilities which belong to us as creatures. We neither acquire them nor lose them by being redeemed.

Having said this, both Seerveld and I wish to add at once that art is *more* than a matter of responsibilities. Art is given to us for our joy and delight. Art belongs to our shalom.

Then too, Seerveld and I agree in wanting art to enter richly and deeply into the lives of all God's people, not just into the lives of the elite among us. Indeed, we want art to enter deeply into the lives of all humanity. We both wish to break the association between art and the elite.

Likewise we agree that behind every work of art there is a world, consisting of the artist's goals, intentions, purposes, convictions; and that the work is an expression of this world behind the work. Characteristically the religion of the artist has central place in that world behind the work. Accordingly, Seerveld and I are both baffled by the reluctance of so many Christians

who write on the arts to acknowledge that some art is Christian and some is not. Surely some art is an expression of a Buddhist mode of thought and existence. In that sense, some art is Buddhist art. Surely also Picasso's art is the expression of a passionate wish to overcome the world and mould it to his own design. In that sense, Picasso's is a pagan 'Promethean' art. Is not the painting of Georges Rouault in a wholly similar way *Christian art*?

To mention one last point of agreement: Seerveld and I agree that 20th century art represents on many fronts a positive aesthetic contribution. It's not true that everything in the art of the 20th century is degradation. Of degradation there is indeed plenty. But also there is advance.

So what's left to disagree on. Anything? Well, yes. Let me point out three areas in which we disagree. In this brief review I cannot argue my case on these matters. All I can do is put the issue before you. If it is something that you wish or ought to pursue further, our respective books are there for your reading.

(1) Seerveld is of the view that art came into its own in the 18th century. I disagree. Art has always been 'in its own'. It never had to come into it. Let me explain. Seerveld is of the view that art comes into its own when it is produced for the purpose of, and when it is used as an object of, aesthetic contemplation. And he holds (as do I) that art for aesthetic contemplation came into full flower for the first time in the 18th century. He does not deny that art has been produced and used for a great many other actions than that of aesthetic contemplation. But it is his view that wherever it is thus produced or used, it hasn't yet fully come into its own. The 'qualifying function' of art is aesthetic contemplation. Thus he says, for example, that 'it is important to affirm that it was good for paintings to become paintings rather than to stay icons, because paintings are called upon in God's world to become full-fledged paintings rather than be crutches for meditation' (166-7). And so, on Seerveld's view, liturgical art is art not come fully into its own. Liturgical art is art serving as crutch for the liturgy.

I see no reason whatsoever to suppose that this is true. It seems to me,

Calvin Seerveld is Senior Member in Aesthetics at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto. Nicholas Wolterstorff is Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. This article is reproduced by kind permission of 'Vanguard' magazine, in which it first appeared. 'Art in Action' is available from Gospel Light Publications, 27 Camden Road, London NW1 9NL, at £5.95, and 'Rainbows for the Fallen World' is available from the Christian Studies Unit, 53 Linden Road, Westbury Park, Bristol, BS6 7RW, at £3.95 plus p + p.

in fact, to be a harmful view. As long as we think along these lines we will regard the composer who humbly serves the purposes of the liturgy in (some of) his compositions as doing something inferior to the composer who serves the concert hall. And that is harmful.

But why suppose that music comes into its own only in the concert hall, that it is not in its own in the church? In my judgment Seerveld has here accepted too uncritically the post-Enlightenment idea that art has something special to do with the aesthetic, a view which has caused enormous suffering and distortion. What came into its own in the 18th century was not art, but *aesthetic contemplation*. The purposes of art are and always have been vastly more diverse than serving as objects of aesthetic contemplation. And art serving these other purposes does not mark some inferior stage on art's road to fulfilment.

(2) Seerveld rightly urges the Christian community to become engaged with the arts – though of course it is and always has been engaged with the arts, so that the real issue is: how is it engaged? and with which art is it engaged? In my judgment, what Seerveld neglects to emphasise here is that we never find art in the abstract, but that always art presents itself to us in the context of a complex social institution of art, which in every society is a *fallen* institution. Thus when a student comes to me and asks for advice as to whether he should seek a career as a performing musician, it is not enough for me to observe to him that music is legitimate for Christians, even more than legitimate – one of their callings. He and I will also have to talk together about that complex social institution of art in which he will find himself immersed if he becomes a performing musician; and we will have to go on to discuss how, and whether, he can live with integrity as a Christian in that fallen institution.

Suppose we distinguish *culture* from *society* – meaning by 'culture' the artefacts that we produce in the course of our humanising the world, and meaning by 'society', that the whole complex of institutions within which we live our lives. We in the Reformed tradition have too long talked about culture as if it were isolated from society. The truth is, of course, that culture always presents itself to us in the context of social institutions. And always those institutions are fallen ones. So it is insufficient, though necessary, to issue ringing calls for Christians to engage in the arts. One must also join Christian artists in the struggles that confront them as they attempt to practice their craft and vocation in the context of the 20th century North American institution of art.

(3) Lastly, I have my troubles with Seerveld's understanding of the aesthetic

dimension. He takes *allusion*, or *suggestion*, to be at the heart of the aesthetic. He holds that the various phenomena of life and reality can have more or less of allusion or suggestion – hence more or less of the aesthetic. And he thinks that the aesthetic is especially prominent, for example, when we are playful, and when we do things just for the delight or fun of it – riding a bicycle into the countryside just for the fun of it is one of his examples.

In the first place, I myself see no special connection between riding a bike for the fun of it, and the phenomenon of allusion or suggestion. Suppose one delights in the air, the breeze, the birds. Where is the suggestion? Where the allusion?

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## He must acknowledge . . . that the presence of the aesthetic doesn't depend on actions or responses of us human beings

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Seerveld never really explains what he means by 'allusion' and 'suggestion'. So presumably he has in mind the phenomena that we customarily pick out with these words. Now in one sense of these words, allusion and suggestion are things that we do. They are acts that we perform. We suggest something, we allude to something. A desk doesn't allude to anything. However, in another sense of 'suggest', the sight of a tree can suggest various things to us, bring various things to mind. Now it looks to me as if Seerveld weaves back and forth between these two phenomena, that of someone alluding to or suggesting something, and that of an object suggesting various things to our minds. In any case, it is clear that on Seerveld's view the aesthetic dimension occurs only when an allusion is made by us or when an object suggests something to us. Apart from human beings, there is no aesthetic dimension, on his view. It all depends on us.

My own guess is that what Seerveld is here groping toward is the same thing that I call *expressiveness*, this in turn grounded on what I call *fittingness*. But if so, then he must acknowledge along with me that the presence of the aesthetic doesn't depend on actions or responses of us humans beings. A line is expressive of weariness whether or not it actually suggests weariness to anyone, and whether or not anyone actually uses it to suggest weariness. Expressiveness is inherent in the nature of things, there for us to discover, not brought into being by us.

So what then is my view on the nature of the aesthetic, if I reject this man-dependent construal of it? For the answer to that, I have no choice but to refer the reader to my book. It

can't be said in two sentences.

Let me say, in conclusion, that the book under review will, I feel sure, energise many Christians into becoming engaged in the arts more responsibly, more 'christianly,' than they have been in the past. Furthermore, much of the book is splendidly written. It has seemed to me that a good deal of Seerveld's writing in the past was mannered and obtrusive, excessively self-conscious. It seemed to me that in that way it often violated the 'norms for the lingual'. Most of that is now gone. The words are still striking. But seldom now does their dazzle interfere with their work.

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## CALVIN SEERVELD

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ART IN ACTION  
Nicholas Wolterstorff  
Don Mills, Ontario,  
Oxford University  
Press, 240pp, \$12.50

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### 1. Overview

Perhaps a good way to help a prospective reader understand this carefully written book is to say it details an ontology of art.

The core of the argument consists, in my judgment, in the exposition of 'fittingness' and in a description of the artist's 'action of world-projection' (96-150). These points on 'fittingness' and the artist's 'action of world-projection' are complemented by a running commentary which is critical of western society's having institutionalised art, our virtually confining fine art to the High Art of museums and concert halls for aesthetic contemplation by an elite. Wolterstorff wants to restore a full, widely diverse, functioning-in-society approach to art. The instrumentality of artworks is a key, underlying thesis.

He self-consciously pursues both his critique of the artistic status quo and his ontology of art-in-action as a participant in the Calvinist tradition of human cultural responsibility in history (78,177).

### 2. Method

Everything is written with exacting, terminological care. You can practically trust the prose that there will be no conceptual confusions. The precision which results from various logical excursions in the text (and in the appendix on 'an expression of', 'expressive of' and 'self-expression') might be daunting for those of us not so trained, but the disciplined clarity of presentation is truly admirable.

Paired with this meticulous care is a disarming casualness. 'Let us say that aesthetic contemplation is ...' so-and-so. 'Let me now for the sake of convenience introduce a bit of terminology'.

Another important example of what is at stake in terms: 'A state of affairs'



is not taken to mean any given creaturely reality that can serve as a touchstone to test human subjectivity; but 'A state of affairs may be described as a way things can or cannot be. So far as I can see, there are such ways' (131). Such use of the term 'state of affairs' allows it to function as a lynchpin in Wolterstorff's ontology of imagined worlds and to shape his main answer as to why humans produce art (145).

There is nothing illegitimate here. Every philosopher needs terms and definitions. It may just be important for a reader to realise (1) that 'Let us say' statements in this book are frequently what Aristotle identifies as unargued, primary *premises*, and (2) that definitions, also informal definitions, like stone fences, have a way of walling in and walling out neighbours in a discussion.

I think too that this engaging, casual manner of introducing analysis reveals a fixed philosophical methodology it would be fair to call 'instrumentalist'. Wolterstorff mentions in the section on 'Norms in Art' that he has 'adopted a qualified instrumentalist theory of artistic value' and of 'aesthetic excellence' (158). I must admit I feel uneasy about how such methodological praxis may affect the root meaning of truth in a Christian philosophy of knowledge about art. (I say this realising that my own claim, namely, that there needs to be a characteristically biblical, jealous view of truth applicable to aesthetic theory, may strike an 'instrumentalist' as ill-conceived or as the 'essentialist fallacy' [7-18, 18]. Cf. my *Rainbows*, pp. 105-9.)

### 3. Systematic crux

*Art in action* is intended as an analytic probe into the basic structural nature of art. 'It is my goal in this book to dig beneath the particulars of how art functions in other societies, down to what is universal in art (page 11).

Two main judgments emerge: (1) The basic framework for our approach to art should be that 'works of art are instruments and objects of action', on the part of the artist and on the part of the public, and NOT, first of all, that artworks are in fact a particular kind of cultural response that bodies forth human (probably faulty) praise of the true God or (possibly brilliant) service to an idol (84-90). (2) Thanks to the marvellous power of envisagement God gave us humans – 'envisagement' is an excellent word to replace Coleridge's clumsy 'esemplastic imagination' – the 'world' imagined and projected by artists in their works 'is the most pervasive and important of the actions that artists perform' (122, 130-34).

I continue to wonder why, with respect to the first main judgment, it is so important for Wolterstorff to oppose what he names 'the Protestant view' and to go out of his way (with an exegesis of Romans 1.18-32 that

strikes me as forced) to reject the position that religion is the inescapable, defining structure of man such that all of a human's actions are actually allegiance to the Holy Spirit or driven by the vanity of Sin. I wonder why, especially because he affirms that *the world behind an artwork* (that complex of what an artist and his or her community believe) is 'often' confirmed in *the world of the work* (89-90, 114). Is this polemic necessary? Or, more pointedly (and I don't mean it rhetorically), must this attempt to honour the full, mixed, historical embeddedness of art in our day of fragmenting secularity entail a denial that art is always an expression of faith-vision and that such expression is necessarily of primary concern?

On the second main systematic



judgment, regarding the artist's 'action of world-projection', let me only observe that 'projection' is a very modern, post-Romantic formulation of the age-old problem of *mimesis* (123), and it seems to keep stage-centre, curiously enough, the benefit of art's being there for 'consideration' (134), the very purpose art-in-action was meant to relativise, namely, the (perceptual or non-perceptual) 'contemplation that satisfies' (10, 44, 82). It is also said that 'pure' music and 'abstract' art are artefacts that are not (ever?) used for projecting imagined worlds (122). If this were so (although I am not convinced 'pure' music and 'non-representational' painting lack such a correlate, imaginary world of meaning), and if it includes 'pure' dance and 'abstract' sculpture as well as architecture (although architecture is not considered a bona fide fine art for the purposes of this book [7, 38]), then such exceptions would seriously impede the theory, it seems to me, from getting at 'what is universal in art'.

### 4. Historiographic judgment

A brief review cannot do justice to the eloquent indictment made in this book of the sins of the modern art world, its institutional establishment of covetous pride in fine art. The piety and deep Christian commitment of the author spill over into numberless insights backed up by an immense amount of firsthand contact with High Art and 'low art' from African masks to John Barth. A reader and a reviewer can only simply be thankful to God for the testimony offered.

But I question the historiographic interpretation made of the development toward art as we know it at the Tarragon theatre, Harbour Front poetry readings, and art gallery. In my judgment it is not idiosyncratic (67, 178) but normative in any developing civilisation for art to come institutionally into its own as art, just as it is normative for education in a developing civilisation to be differentiated into school institutions for education-as-such in society. Our Christian critique should fault the elitist idolatry and wilful hermeticism of musea and concert hall in western culture but not its institutionalisation.

### 5. Questions for opening discussion

The remarks Wolterstorff makes about the institution of high art also hold, he hints, for our world of professional, academic philosophising (208). With

that in mind I alter his moving diagnosis on page 61 to read: 'The institution of high professional philosophy is a profoundly secular institution – with the result that the philosopher who identifies himself deeply with some religious community will constantly have the experience of being a divided self living in two worlds. The institution of high professional academic philosophy is a jealous god'.

No Christian philosopher in aesthetic theory wants to be double-minded and divided against oneself. It would help us much in pursuing an integrated Christian aesthetic theory, I think, if it could be shown how the 'theoretical equipment' (132) of art-as-instrument for-action-use is cause-generated by his basic Reformed world-and-life-view. Otherwise, where does this proposed strategy as 'the basic framework' for our Christian approach to art come from?

I ask myself whether Wolterstorff's strong drive to emphasise the rightful, relative, multiple place of (fine) art in society has not let him mistake a necessary external relation of art for its definitive internal structure. I also wonder whether a more developed Christian *philosophical cosmology* (beyond the matter of 'fittingness' – creation order holds during historical change – might not help furnish us with a stance on norms for art that does not remain with an 'instrumentalist' conception of good art (158).

There are more 'good' questions to ask, because *Art in action* is a serious attempt to move us onward toward a Christian aesthetic theory.

# Critique

## Cinema/Hazel Bidewell Does one life matter?

### MISSING

Directed by Costa-Gavras

UIP, Cert AA, released in London 27 May.

So topical is this film that when, later on in the evening, the TV cameras showed troops in El Salvador, I was hard put to it to decide whether I was watching a continuation of 'Missing' or whether what I had seen during the day was really an 'in depth' version of the six o'clock news. Here was proof that it is not necessary to put on a star-studded spectacular, or even for that matter to have apparently much of a story, to make some very cogent points with directness and superb artistry.

Charles Horman (John Shea), a young American journalist living and working in an unnamed Latin American country, is arrested and disappears. No enquiries on the part of his wife Beth (Sissy Spacek) or his father Ed (Jack Lemmon) produce anything other than conflicting reports or plausible double-talk: the plot is based on a terrifying real-life story. The sub-plot brings Beth and Ed to a new understanding of, and respect for, each other, and reveals

things about Charles hitherto unappreciated by his father. On the way, we catch a glimpse of some of the unflattering skeletons Charles has uncovered in his country's cupboards (but were his own affiliations as a journalist entirely blameless?).

We are left in no doubt as to the horrors of a military coup; the curfew, the senseless destruction by nervous, trigger-happy soldiers; the disregard for life and property, the fearful, passive, blank acceptance of the situation by the situation by the majority of the people, the brutality and the tension. Nothing in the film is over-dramatised, but the realism is chilling, the impact shattering.

Directed by Costa-Gavras, 'Missing' follows in a tradition of his films with explosive, political flavour but which homes in on the human drama lying behind the headlines. Here he looks at a community gone berserk and traces the trail of suffering, translating callous statistics into human terms. 'In a country where 20,000 people were suddenly dead or missing,' he has said, 'what does one life matter, more or less? It has to matter. Or we are less than human.'

This film is the official American entry to the Cannes Film Festival this year. It hits hard. 'Missing' could be anywhere and anyone - of us.

## Stephen Martin GPs and the politics of medicine

### THE FAMILY DOCTOR: HIS LIFE AND HISTORY

Ronald Gibson

Allen & Unwin, 1981, xv+ 214pp, £9.50

Sir Ronald Gibson has had special experiences to qualify him to write this book. He is not only a family doctor, but was also chairman of the BMA 'Parliament', the Representative Body.

The book is thus two interwoven stories, the one of Sir Ronald's own life, as a general practitioner, and the other of the history of medicine, dwelling particularly on the politics of medicine over the last 30 years.

As a family doctor, I found the personal history the more interesting part, providing a glimpse into Sir Ronald's way of life as a sincere and compassionate GP. He recalls the nostalgic days when a family doctor was known as a real family friend in his local neighbourhood and was unable to walk down a station platform without being consulted or congratulated by his patients.

Much of the discussion on the interface between the profession and the government makes depressing reading. Governments are slow to change, slow to implement recommendations and not infrequently guilty of dishonesty. However, whatever the shortcomings of the present system, it is so much better than it was at its inception in 1948 that it is hardly recognisable as the same National Health Service.

GPs are better trained and facilities for post-graduate education are well established. The GP is no longer an isolated doctor but part of an organised primary health care team. He has been able to adapt to the changing needs of a changing society. He has become increasingly society's 'priest' and only a small proportion of his time is spent on pure medical care. On the other hand, there is a devaluation of the doctor's authority by the ignoring of his unique knowledge of a family and the use of social workers and others to decide on social needs.

The historical background to general practice shows how the generally well-respected profession of today was anything but that in the past, with just about anyone being able to practise medicine, without any training whatever. There is also an excellent chapter on the demands placed upon the doctor's family and their involvement in his practice.



# Checklist

Many books are published which we believe Third Way readers would like to know about, though we cannot review them all

## Ethics

**THE NECESSITY OF ETHICAL ABSOLUTES**, by Erwin W. Lutzer, with a response by Mark M. Hanna. Paternoster, December 1981, xi+1100pp. £3.80. (Christian Free University Curriculum. Philosophy series) Examines cultural relativism, situation ethics, behaviourism and emotive ethics, finds that they replace traditional western ethics with other moral absolutes, and argues that Judeo-Christian ethical values are still worth considering in a society dominated by humanistic systems.

## History

**PIUS XII, HITLER AND THE JEWS**, by J. Darek Holmes. Catholic Truth Society, 1982, ii+188pp. £0.40. Dilemmas facing the Pope who was elected in 1939, and how he risked losing his reputation to save Jewish lives. Taken largely from chapter 4 of the author's 'The Papacy in the Modern World' (Burns & Oates, 1981).

**THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCHES IN A REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION**, by Merjorie Hope & James Young. Paternoster, 1981, xiv+268pp. £8.60.

Four chapters of historical background precede 13 on the state and the churches (taken each denomination in turn) from 1960 on, and a further 3 chapters looking to the future. Detailed chronicling, but with emphasis on personalities.

## Medicine

**THERAPY AND CARE**, by G.R. Dunstan. Aberdeen University Press, March 1982, 26pp. £1.00. The Malcolm Miller Lecture for 1981, on psychotherapy.

## Music

**MODERNIZING HYMNODY**, by Chris Idle. Grove Books, July 1982, 24pp. £0.70. (Grove Workshop Booklets, 81) General principles of updating old hymns; by one of the editors of 'Hymns for Today's Church' (due from Hodder in November).

## Politics & Government

**HOLINESS AND POLITICS**, by Peter Hinchliff. Darton, Longman & Todd, June 1982, 272pp. £8.50.

## Psychology

**EMOTIONS**, by James C. Dobson. Hodder & Stoughton, June 1982, 144pp. £1.50.

## Race & Immigration

**THE ENEMY WITHIN**. Soundstrip: 134 frames + cassette tape 29 mins. £20 to buy, £5 to hire.

British Council of Churches Community and Race Relations Unit (2 Eaton Gate, London SW1W 9BL)

Black people describe what it is like to suffer from people's racial prejudice.

## Sex and Marriage

**CHRISTIANS AND SEX**, by Edward H. Petay. Mowbray, 1981, 31pp. £0.60. (Enquirer's Library series)

**DIVORCE: ONE WOMAN'S VIEW**, by Monica Furlong. Mothers' Union, 1981, 28pp. £0.80.

## Social & Moral Theology

**TO CORINTH WITH LOVE: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN THE LIGHT OF PAUL'S LETTERS TO CORINTH**, by Michael Green. Hodder & Stoughton, June 1982, 128pp. £1.50.

**LIFESTYLE IN THE EIGHTIES: AN EVANGELICAL COMMITMENT TO SIMPLE LIFESTYLE**, edited by Ronald J. Sider. Paternoster, 1982, 256pp. £5.80. (Contemporary Issues in Social Ethics, vol. 1) Includes the Statement endorsed by the International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle (Hoddesdon, Herts., 1980), with background papers by Ronald Sider, Viney Samuel and Chris Sugden, Rene Padilla, David Watson, Donald Hey, Gottfried Osei-Mensah & Teddies Meruyama, and testimonies and Bible Study notes.

(More detailed information of the book which we first Checklisted in February.)

**AN EVANGELICAL COMMITMENT TO SIMPLE LIFESTYLE: EXPOSITION AND COMMENTARY** by Alan Nichols. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation (available from Scripture Union bookshops), 1981, 34pp. £0.50. (Lausanne Occasional Papers, 20)

The Statement, written and endorsed by the International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle (Hoddesdon, Herts., 1980), with commentary and short bibliography.

**THE CREATIVE** by Sidney Bigman. Remsey: A.M.F., 1981, 303pp. £9.95. Christian social & economic consideration in industrial countries.

## Sociology

**THE POVERTY DEBATE AND THE CHURCHES**. William Temple Foundation (Manchester Business School, M15 6PB). Studies being undertaken by church groups concerned with poverty.

## World Development

**ARCHBISHOP ROMERO: MARTYR OF SALVADOR** by Placidio Erdosain. Lutterworth, 1981, xxvi+101pp, illus. £2.95

Portrait of the Archbishop who started as a studious end introverted conservative end was ultimately shot because of his political identification with the oppressed.

Sir Ronald does not comment on the more disturbing facts relating to the doctors themselves, such as the highest rate of alcoholism and suicide of any social group. Nor does he discuss the difficult ethical problems that face any Christian doctor in trying to deal with problems that arise from deteriorating moral standards in society.

Tony Walter

# Lament for the working class

## UNEMPLOYMENT

Jeremy Seabrook

Quartet Books, 1982, xiv+226, £8.95

In this book, Jeremy Seabrook shows that the degradation of unemployment is not a polar opposite to the dignity of work; rather, the generally appalling experience of unemployment is directly related to the generally appalling experience of work. The author's burden is that, in spite of increased benefits, unemployment is perhaps an even worse experience now than in the 1930s.

The book is like a television documentary in prose, with cameos of unemployed men, women and families that the author interviewed and lived with; it is easy reading, and moving in places. Essentially, it is a powerful lament by a committed socialist over what has happened to the working class in the last couple of generations. Seabrook shows what has been lost as the price of material progress, the costs that are drowned in the babble of the market place but that working class folk continually refer to in the sense of loss that pervades their talk. If there is one word that sums this up, it is *demoralisation*, in both senses of the word: a sense of despair and loss of hope, and a general loss of a previous set of moral values. It is the demoralisation of the working class in general that makes unemployment so bitter.

How does this demoralisation show itself? Despite the fears of the Luddites, industrial capitalism until now has in general proved its need for labour in vast numbers. The generation of the 1930s believed their labour to be indispensable. From their toil in important, basic industries producing indisputably useful products such as ships, food and clothes, arose the dignity of the old working class and its stoicism in hard times. This was the moral capital of the labour movement which provided hope for the unemployed of the 1930s.

Hope no longer exists. The solidarity, the sharing of what little they had, is now replaced by the collapse of

neighbourliness, every man for himself, and spying by neighbours on social security 'scroungers'.

The unemployed of the 1930s could use his or her skills in metalwork or textiles to help the family get by (there is a touching example of an ex-welder from a Sunderland shipyard who recalled how he made mugs for his family from old tin cans); but what use are the skills developed today by the ex-worker from a plastics or silicon chip factory? There is what Illich calls a new poverty here, a loss of the capability of acting autonomously, a new dependence on the market. People have been de-skilled not only as producers but also as consumers, so that they must now purchase what previously they could do themselves. As Marx predicted, everything now has to be bought and sold, and human values and resourcefulness have disappeared. As one old lady from Sheffield put it, 'Working-class people used to be proud of how much they can do with very little money; now people feel ashamed of how little they can do without a lot of it.' The impoverished minority has now become the desired norm.

Seabrook tries not to romanticise the poverty of the 1930s. The tragedy for him is that a once prudent, frugal working class was confronted with the prospect of plenty and could have combined the two, frugality and plenty, to end poverty for ever. It chose not to; it chose instead to swap one poverty for another. I am not satisfied by Seabrook's explanation of why this opportunity was missed, but the book does not claim to be a major treatise in sociological theory; its strength lies elsewhere, in the simple documentation of how half this country lives.

There is much here to ponder for those readers of *Third Way* who are committed to living more simply. The book shows how a couple of generations ago, this country had the values of frugality, responsibility and mutual sharing that Sider et al now long for. Seabrook provides no evidence that their loss had much to do with any loss spirituality. For him, moral strength comes from the dignity of labour, and capitalism once found it profitable to exalt labour. Now 'labour saving' is capitalism's proudest achievement; labour is in decline, and the moral strength goes with it.

The loss of moral fibre Seabrook documents reminds me of Mary Whitehouse, yet his explanation of this loss is Marxist. This is a materialist account of what underlies moral values (and even theological values, such as hope), a paradox perhaps because the author is manifestly against that other kind of materialism, the mad rush after commodities.

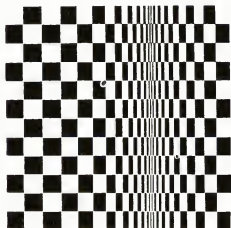
There is much we can glean from this book, and we are certainly reminded of the enormity of the task

ahead. The old labour movement is dead; what will replace it? The field is open.

## Barbara D'Arcy Exuberant jungle of art

THE OXFORD COMPANION TO  
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edited by Harold Osborne OUP, 655pp,  
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Bridget Riley: 'Movements in Squares', 1962

## REVIEWERS THIS MONTH

HAZEL BIDEWELL is a freelance writer

BARBARA D'ARCY is an artist and a member of staff of 'Third Way' and 'Today' magazines.

DR STEPHEN MARTIN practises medicine in Luton.

IAIN MCGREGOR is a freelance journalist.

J A WALTER is a writer living in Bath.

friends / enemies / contacts / teachers / schools, all are there, and one can roam about in this book as one might prowl from room to room in a well-planned gallery, often finding oneself back in room number one but with another viewpoint. The illustrations are generous and representative and the colour good. Harold Osborne, who edited the *Oxford Companion to Art* and the *Oxford Companion to the Decorative Arts*, has given us another valuable guide book for what he calls 'the exuberant jungle of contemporary art'.

## Iain McGregor Arts desire

ONE OF THE RICHEST GIFTS,  
John Wilson,  
Hansel Press, 1981, 124pp, £5 (paperback).

The world took a clerk and made him redundant. But God made him a prophet. Crusader for and defender of the arts, John Wilson is the kind of man you pass in the street without a second glance. That's how he likes it. It's good to know as much because you would never guess from his book. In fluent style, he delivers a steady polemic of due seriousness and received wisdom. He is in the best tradition of the state educated working-class Scot, a self-made fireside authority, even though he has spent an Indian summer in study for his degree through the Open University. Given a couple of thousand to quit Motherwell steel works, he invested it in his own untried authorhood.

It is good to already have this knowledge, I repeat, because you would never have found out from the blurb. A stodgy piece on the back of the cover makes no reference to the author, only to the questions he raises within. Thus the no-side bit writer could be mistaken for an eminent academic or theologian, a cuts-proof denizen of our densest, most distinguished seat of learning. The measured pace, the assured grip of his esoteric subject betrays nothing of the gnawing worries of a middle-aged freelance with no private income.

In full control of his multi-faceted vehicle, John Wilson drives us inexorably over a bumpy road to his promised land — the kingdom where the arts live, as he says with John Calvin, 'for God's glory and our good.' The itinerary is a Baedeker of baseness and beauty. What, for example, are we to make of this: 'It is the task of the Christian ... to seek to bring the healing of the cross to the bruised body of the contemporary arts.' (page 32) The healing of the cross? Is he trying to reassure or convert the old-fashioned evangelical with a

If the author is apt to repeat himself, it is the old preacher's licence and does not diminish his message. But what is reprehensible is sloppy proof-reading. A dozen serious printer's errors detract from an otherwise pleasing work of art. Also, the publisher has failed to add an all-important finishing touch — a memorable title. The clumsy label 'One of the Richest Gifts' reflects the author's mind-set, showing just how much of an old-fashioned evangelical John Wilson really is. It's the kind of heading you would expect on one of these quaint old tracts still littering our streets. But even if this treatise comes from the same pouch, at least it doesn't read like a warmed-up thesis. Who, then, is it aimed at? May it go to the people Schaeffer doesn't reach.

Not so much attention is directed at the key in question: *what is the essence of loneliness?* This surely is a deep inability to see other people, not as strangers, but as individuals of one's own kind; to see and to some extent to understand them as individuals with the same longings, frustrations, even loneliness, as oneself. 'It is a kind of blindness', says a minister long ex-

# The essence of loneliness

David Gunston

The sufferer from loneliness, perhaps already forced by the world's rejection and harshness to be somewhat inward-looking, therefore fails to see that others are sufferers, too. It is as if his eyes are clouded over with misery at his own plight. The net result of this is a much more marked tendency to turn away, to withdraw a lot further, from a desire not to find more hurt, and partly from a wish to avoid the reproaches, scorn, and even possibly the pity or sympathy of others. This impelled form of withdrawal tends to intensity and so spreads to wider areas of life, bringing with it an ever-lessening ability to cope with life outside oneself. So starts a vicious circle, because feeling unable to face any more, the lonely person finds himself unable to cope any more with what has to be faced and

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Very often the person concerned is only kept going by a very few others near him, often relatives or work-mates on whom he becomes dependent. Usually such supports remain such out of genuine sympathy and concern, but they grow increasingly worried as they find the sufferer more and more hard to console or uplift, inevitably harder to please or to break out of his shell of self-pity and constantly-reiterated moanings. 'Why should this happen to me?' and 'What have I done to deserve this?' are characteristically misguided heart cries of people in such moods and situations.

This also explains why basically

situation. The fellowship offered is not the blissful balm that was sought by the newcomer in some hopeful dream. Instead, he finds a loose association of ordinary mortals, just as individual and individually sensitive and riddled with jealousies, rivalries and antipathies as any human association usually is.

If the gathering happens to be a church, expectations tend to be higher and even more exaggerated, with notions of a totally peaceful atmosphere offering complete mental security untouched by failure. As the novelist Antonia White points out in wise refutation of all such ideas: 'In fact, if a church is what she claims to be, she *should* be full of the most

large, which hardly helps the newcomer in his predicament.

Nevertheless, even if excessive talk of this bemoaning can often be all-too-easily recognised for what it is, a substitute for actually doing something about the situation, it is never without any value. As with the few people or even single person on whom the solitary comes increasingly to rely as support and audience, so long as one human being, however bored, however wearied, is prepared to listen and go on listening to another in this kind of strait, he or she is keeping the sufferer in the real world and so saving them from being lost in what one social worker calls 'the labyrinth of self-preoccupation'. There is a hard core of long-term lonely people, embittered and constantly rancorous, who lack even this limited support and audience.

Anyone suffering acutely from loneliness must try by whatever means are available to him to remain in the real world where real people are, not least because it is there that he is most likely to receive help. If he can manage to achieve or retain even the smallest, most tenuous emotional involvement in the real world of real people, with all their joys and sorrows, successes and failures, beauties and warts, then he is on the road towards what every mature individual needs so much.

Real help in loneliness can only come jointly from two sources: from the sufferer's resolve not to withdraw, not to write off humanity for any reason, to work through his suffering and so out the other side; and from the patience and sympathy and love of the rest of us. Therein lies not only the essence of loneliness, but also its relief.

*David Gunston, for over 35 years a professional writer, lives in Portsmouth.*



lonely people are so often disillusioned, or at least disappointed, if and when they timorously decide to do something about their aloneness, and taking a great plunge, join some group. Maybe it is a leisure interest society or club, church, evening-class or gathering of 'singles', divorced or other lonely folk who have banded together to try and find a way out of their own solitary

mixed, incongruous and mutually antipathetic human beings.' And if the groups is of the last-described kind, then its members tend to enter it already well-dusted with life's hardships and the prejudices these have brought them. Some, indeed, seem most interested in airing their complaints about parents, friends, former spouses, employers and society at

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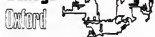
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Address .....

Donation towards  
postage and packing .....

Total enclosed .....